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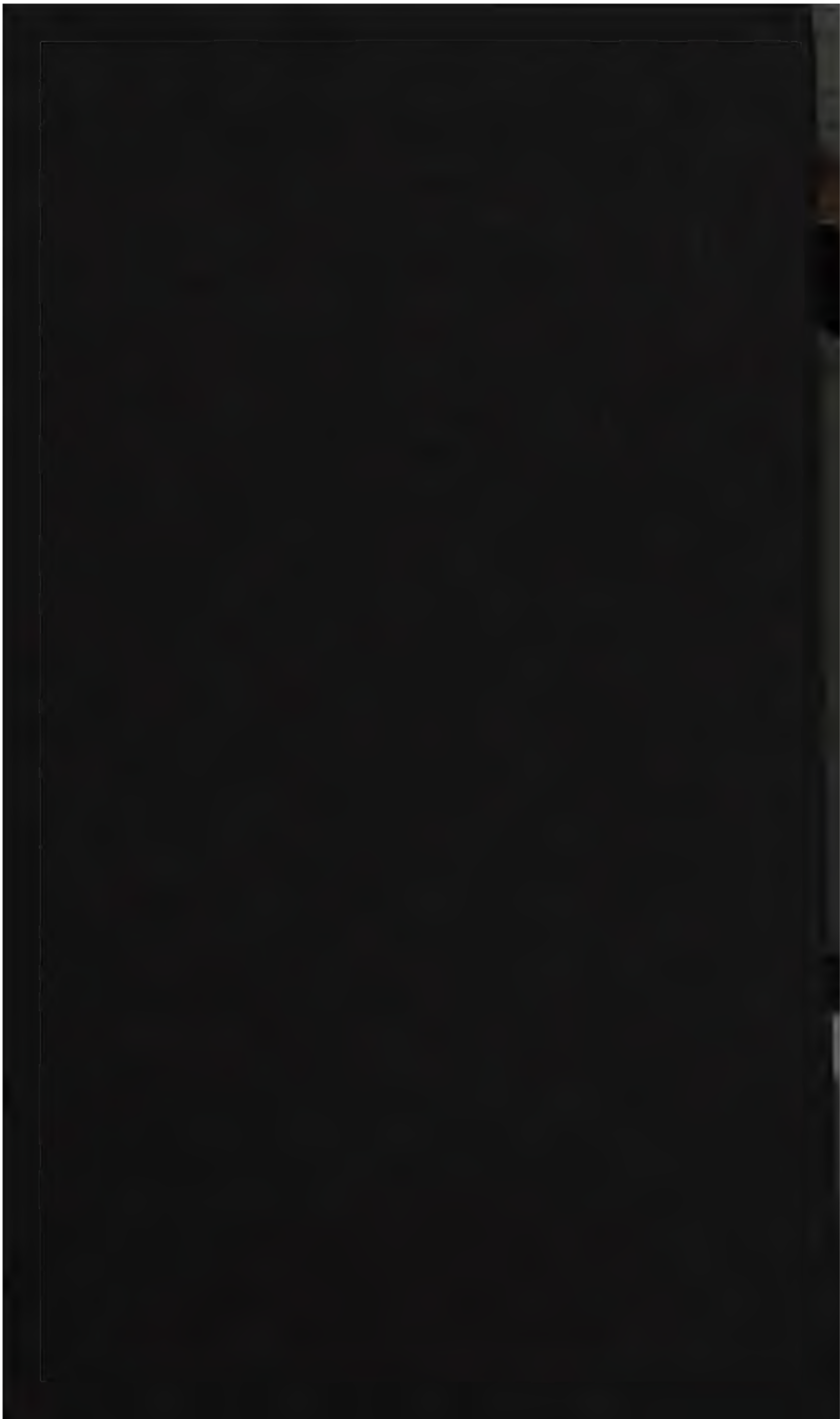
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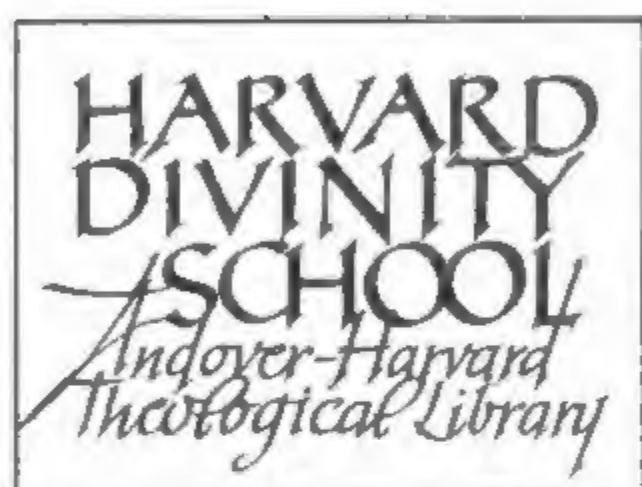
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SACRED ANNALS:

OR,

RESEARCHES

INTO

THE HISTORY AND RELIGION OF MANKIND.

VOLUME II.

The Hebrew People.

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THE
H E B R E W P E O P L E :

OR,

The History and Religion of the Israelites,

FROM THE

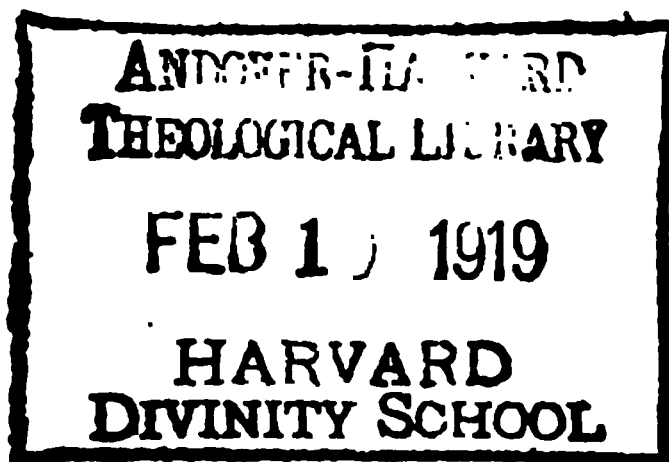
ORIGIN OF THE NATION TO THE TIME OF CHRIST :

DEDUCED FROM THE WRITINGS OF MOSES, AND
OTHER INSPIRED AUTHORS ;

AND ILLUSTRATED BY COPIOUS REFERENCES TO THE ANCIENT RECORDS,
TRADITIONS, AND MYTHOLOGY OF THE HEATHEN WORLD.

BY GEORGE SMITH, F. S. A.,
MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE, OF THE IRISH
ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ETC.

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P R E F A C E.

THE second part of the "SACRED ANNALS," which is now presented to the public, comprises the History and Religion of the Hebrew People, from the Origin of the Nation to the Time of Christ. In the preparation of this portion of the work, the Author has steadily kept in view the purpose which he announced in the Preface to the preceding volume; namely, to "present a complete view of the history and religion" of this nation in a decidedly religious manner. In the prosecution of this attempt he has encountered great, and, in some respects, unexpected, difficulty. To arrange and condense into a limited compass the civil and religious history of a great people during seventeen centuries, would, under any circumstances, be a work sufficiently onerous; but this has been greatly increased by numerous collateral subjects, of the most embarrassing character, with which the history of the Jews is involved. The most important questions in theology, the most recondite inquiries in ancient history, the most perplexing cases of Biblical criticism, the most difficult problems in early geography,—all obtruded themselves upon the attention of the writer; and required to be investigated, adjusted, reconciled, and wrought up into a homogeneous narrative. Beyond all the embarrassments from these sources, has been that occasioned by the irreligious and unscriptural tendency of the productions of certain authors, whose great talents, extensive learning, and high character, have invested their opinions with some degree of authority, and might have served the cause of truth, instead of imperiling its best interests.

The Author has, however, devoted his best energies to the work; and, although impeded by many other engagements, has spared neither expense nor labor to present to the reader, in a combined form, an ample epitome of Jewish history, and a complete exhibition of Hebrew religion, intended in all its parts to illustrate the great purpose of God in the redemption of man.

In the commencement of the Epistle to the Hebrews we are taught, that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners

spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." We, therefore, who enjoy the benefit of this full revelation of Divine love and mercy through Christ Jesus, are furnished with "a light that shineth" into the dark places of preceding dispensations; and are thus enabled to invest our views of past generations with the spirit of evangelical godliness.

This having been the object of the Author, it is almost superfluous to say, that he has taken the Holy Scripture as his guide. It has been his constant aim to admit, maintain, and illustrate the truth of the sacred oracles. While he has carefully sought out other sources of information, and diligently consulted every available authority, he has, in respect of these, endeavored to avoid equally a servile submission to human judgment, and a captious rejection of the legitimate influence of intellect and learning.

The serious discouragements under which the Author has labored, have been, in some measure, counteracted by the favor with which the first volume has been received: and by the earnest manner in which many individuals, whose judgment is entitled to respect, have requested him to complete his scheme. From the United States, also, where the "Patriarchal Age" has been republished and favorably noticed, the Author has had communications urging him to prosecute his purpose to completion.

With respect to the plan of this volume, one remark only is necessary. When entering upon the work, it was perceived that, unless some means were adopted to guard against it, the numerous and necessary critical disquisitions arising out of the subject, would prevent the possibility of maintaining anything like unity in the narrative. To meet this difficulty, it was decided to transmute a large portion of this digressive matter into Notes at the end of each chapter.*

The concluding volume of the series, for which considerable preparation has already been made, will, it is hoped, be completed at no distant period. It is intended to embrace the History and Religion of the Gentile Nations, from the Death of Isaac to the Christian Era.

TREVU, CAMBORNE,

September 15th, 1849.

* [In the American edition these valuable "Notes" are inserted in the Appendix, so as not to break the continuity of the narrative.—AM. EDITOR.]

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Origin of Nations usually obscure—That of the Hebrews an Exception—Owe their national Existence to divine Election. I. PERSONAL AND FAMILY HISTORY OF THE HEBREW PATRIARCHS as bearing upon this Election. Scripture Promises exhibiting this divine Purpose—This Purpose asserted—Abraham—Isaac—Jacob and Esau—Their Relation to the Promise—Esau sells his Birthright—Jacob obtains the Blessing—He journeys to Padan-aram—The Vision at Bethel—His Sojourn with Laban—He returns—Is pursued—Wrestles with an Angel—Its religious Effect—Meets Esau happily—Jacob dwells in Canaan—Partiality to Joseph, who is sold into Egypt by his Brethren—His conduct there—Made Governor of Egypt—Brings his Father and Family into that Country—Intense Interest which the Hebrews felt in the divine Promises—Their Confidence and Hope—Are persecuted by the Egyptians. II. THE MIRACLES WHICH PRECEDED AND EFFECTED THE EXODUS. The peculiar State of the Israelites, and their future Destiny, required the Power and Wisdom of God to be displayed in their Deliverance—Birth and Preservation of Moses—His noble Choice and mighty Faith—His Interposition, Flight, and Sojourn in Midian—Is sent by God to demand the Release of the Israelites—The Miracle of the Serpent—The Water turned into Blood—The Plague of Frogs—Of Lice—Of Flies—Of Murrain—Of Boils—Of Hail—Of Locusts—Of Darkness—The Passover appointed, and the First-born of Egypt slain—The Israelites leave Egypt—Their March—Are pursued by Pharaoh—Their Danger—A Passage opened for them through the Sea—Their Enemies destroyed—The Hebrews, in Safety and Freedom, return Thanksgiving to God.

THE origin of nations is usually much obscured by fiction and fable, if not enveloped in darkness. The annals of almost every people describe them, at a certain period of their history, as emerging from a cloudy obscurity into which the eye of the historian cannot penetrate, so as to trace with distinctness and precision their previous career. To this general rule the Hebrew nation forms a very remarkable exception. The origin of this people is not only clearly exhibited by authentic history, but, like their whole course, stands prominently before us as a part of divinely revealed truth.

Nor does the information thus afforded serve merely to show the source whence this wonderful race of men arose, or the fostering circumstances which multiplied a family into a nation: it clearly displays the great purpose of God, of which his continual interposition throughout their national history was the development. The history and religion, the character and destiny, of the Hebrew people cannot, therefore, be profitably discussed, without a careful investigation into the circumstances of their ancestors, from the vocation of Abram to the period of the Exodus. It is the object of this introductory chapter to trace these circumstances

as they arose out of the election of the house of Israel, and the obedient faith of Abram, Isaac, and Jacob, under the continued interposition of Jehovah for the accomplishment of his own declared purpose, until the Hebrews are presented to the world as a separate and independent people.

In the prosecution of this purpose, two important subjects are presented to our attention: The family history of the Hebrew patriarchs, as exhibiting and illustrating the divine election of the house of Israel to be a great and favored nation; and the continued series of miraculous interpositions which preceded and which effected the Exodus. A careful consideration of these subjects will form a suitable and essential preliminary to an investigation into the history and religion of the Hebrew people.

I. The personal and family history of the Hebrew patriarchs, as exhibiting and illustrating the divine election of the house of Israel.

When Moses informs us that the family of Terah had emigrated from Ur of the Chaldees, and taken up their residence in Haran, he assigns no reason or cause for this movement. But the information withheld in the Old Testament is supplied in the New. In the memorable speech of Stephen, the inspired deacon says, "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran." Acts vii, 2-4. Here the important information is given, that the first movement of Abraham from his native place was in obedience to a direct communication from God. But we have no intimation that any promise was given at this time. Jehovah appears to have announced his will, which the patriarch implicitly obeyed.

The first intimation given in Holy Scripture of the special appointment of the Hebrew people to be a great and favored nation, is contained in the divine communication made to Abram, when he was called to leave Haran. A particular locality was then indicated, and a specific promise given: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation." Gen. xii, 1, 2. After the patriarch had obeyed, and journeyed into the land of Canaan, he was told that this was the country which his descendants should occupy; for "the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land." Gen. xii, 7. This promise was confirmed and expanded after Lot left the company of his uncle. Then "the Lord said unto Abraham, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the

dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." Gen. xiii, 14-17.

Further revelations afterwards defined the extent of country which had been so fully promised, and the period when the family of Abram should take possession of it. On that memorable occasion when God entered into covenant with this patriarch, He said unto him, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. . . . In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." Gen. xv, 13-21. Thus was Abram assured, in explicit terms, of the extent of the country which his seed should inhabit, the precise time when they should take possession of it, and the various tribes or nations which should be cast out before them.

After the birth of Ishmael, when the Lord appointed the rite of circumcision (see *Appendix*, note 1) as a sign of the special covenant which he had made with Abram, and when his name was altered by divine command, further intimations were given of the number of the patriarch's posterity, and especially of that branch unto whom the covenant was to descend. On that occasion, God said unto Abram, "I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." Gen. xvii, 2-8. And at the same time, after having appointed the rite of circumcision, the Almighty proceeded to promise, in the clearest and most explicit manner, that Abraham should

have another son, who should be the heir of this special covenant. "God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with him seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee." Gen. xvii, 15-21.

Language can scarcely be more comprehensive or precise than this. Every kind of misconception is guarded against, every doubt removed; and the promises which had been so amply and particularly given to Abraham are here, with equal certainty, limited to Isaac, and were subsequently communicated directly unto him. After the death of his father, Isaac went to Gerar; "and the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxvi, 2-4.

These covenant-promises were afterward given to Jacob and his descendants. Before his birth, Rebekah was divinely informed, that from the twins in her womb two nations should descend; that the one people should be stronger than the other; and that the elder should serve the younger. The language appears to intimate, although in rather obscure terms, that the younger of these children should inherit the promise. But this fact is clearly stated in the revelations made to Jacob at Bethel, when on his journey to Padan-aram. On that occasion Jehovah said unto him, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." Gen. xxviii, 13-15. The same promise was repeated after the

return of Jacob to Canaan. Then "God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins. And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land." Gen. xxxv, 11, 12.

At the hazard of being thought tedious, the above collection of promises and predictions has been placed before the reader, as exhibiting at one view the plan and purpose of God. These are not fragments culled from the history of the men, or of the nation. They are declarations of the divine will, avowals of the predetermined purposes of God to make Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and, after them, the Jewish nation and polity, auxiliary to the advent of Messiah, and preliminary to the establishment of his universal kingdom of grace. These portions of Scripture do not, therefore, exhibit any of the ordinary divine interpositions in the affairs, fortunes, and destinies of nations; they do this in a certain sense, but the object of which they speak is infinitely greater: it is the introduction of a new element into God's government of the world,—the selection of a family destined to be the human progenitors of the Messiah, and the appointment of a nation which, constantly guided by a special providence, and made the depository of revealed truth, should prepare the way for the development of the great scheme of redemption.

It is important to insist on this view before any reference is made to the character and conduct of the patriarchs; because nothing is more frequent than to find skeptics and infidels of every grade confounding the design of God with the policy of man, and stultifying the divine plan, because some of the persons who have been brought within its range have acted unworthily. This is unreasonable and unjust. The texts which have been quoted show, in outline, the divine intention: this was wise and merciful, the result of infinite wisdom and boundless love, the plan best adapted to magnify the mercy of God, and to effect the salvation of man.

Here to pause and defend the justice or the propriety of this course cannot be necessary. The Almighty Governor saw at his feet a rebellious and ruined world. He selected one faithful man, gave unto him special promises, and raised from his seed a nation, which he called into special covenant with himself, made them the recipients of revealed truth, and appointed the Messiah to be born, and his universal kingdom to be first set up, among this people. This course was taken as the best adapted for the maintenance of his truth, and the manifestation of his grace. In a manner the most demonstrative, it has in all ages been attested as the work and wisdom of God. If, with this fact written imperishably on all the records of ancient history, engraven in everlasting

CHAPTER VI.

THE HISTORY AND RELIGION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE DIVISION OF THE HEBREWS INTO TWO INDEPENDENT KINGDOMS—Jeroboam, the first King of Israel, selects Shechem for his Capital—Establishes the Worship of golden Calves at Bethel and Dan—The Consequences of this Conduct—Jeroboam rebuked by a Prophet—Miraculously punished and restored—The Death of the King's Son, and the total Ruin of the royal House, predicted by Ahijah—War with Judah—Israel defeated—Nadab reigns—Is slain, and succeeded by Baasha, who prosecutes the War with Judah successfully—Israel invaded by the Syrians—Jehu the Prophet predicts the ruin of the House of Baasha—Elah succeeds his Father, and is slain—A civil War between two rival Factions, headed by Omri and Tibni—The Death of Tibni—Omri reigns—Ahab succeeds his Father—Marries Jezebel—Introduces Phenician Idolatry—And persecutes the Worshipers of Jehovah—Jericho rebuilt, and Joshua's Malediction verified—The Prophet Elijah—The Three Years of Drought and Famine—Ruinous Condition of the Kingdom—Elijah meets Ahab—The Miracle of Carmel—The Prophets of Baal slain—Rain given—Elijah threatened with Death—Escapes—Is sent to anoint Hazael King of Syria, Jehu King of Israel, and Elisha to be Prophet—Israel invaded by Benhadad—Delivered according to the Word of a Prophet—The Invasion repeated the next Year—And again repulsed—The Death of Naboth—Prophecy of Elijah—Fearful Doom of the House of Ahab—Jehoshaphat unites with Ahab to war against Ramoth—Prophecy of Micaiah—Death of Ahab—Ahaziah reigns—Fails in his Attempt to restore the maritime Commerce with Ophir—Jehoram reigns—Elijah translated, and succeeded by Elisha, who works Miracles—Makes known the Counsels of Benhadad—And defeats the Designs of the Syrians—Samaria besieged—Suffers from a terrible Famine—Is divinely delivered—Hazael succeeds to the Throne of Syria—Jehu anointed King—Kills Jehoram, Jezebel, and all the Children of Ahab—Destroys the Prophets of Baal, and prohibits that Idolatry—Jehoahaz succeeds to the Throne—Israel suffers from the Syrians under Hazael—Joash reigns—Prosperes in his War with Syria—Triumphs over Judah—Jeroboam II. reigns, and greatly increases the Power of Israel—Hosea and Amos prophecy—Zechariah reigns—Is killed by Shallum, who is destroyed by Manahem—In his Reign Assyria invades Israel—Pekahiah reigns—Is slain by Pekah, who succeeds, and forms an Alliance with Syria—Vanquishes Judah—Hoshea reigns—Is dethroned, and the Kingdom destroyed by the Assyrians.....Page 270

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THE HISTORY AND RELIGION OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.

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be put to Death—Jerusalem spoiled by Hazael of Syria—Joash is murdered in his Bed, and succeeded by Amaziah—He begins to reign well—Invades Edom—Is victorious—Worships the Deities of Seir—Is rebuked by a Prophet—Whom he threatens—He provokes a War with Israel—Is defeated, and taken Prisoner—Uzziah succeeds to the Throne—He reigns well—Humbles the Philistines, Ammonites, and Arabians—Strengthens the Army—Invents important military Engines—~~HE INVADERS THE PRIEST'S OFFICE,~~ and, attempting to offer Incense, is smitten with Leprosy—The Nature and Influence of the prophetic Office—Jotham reigns piously—Micah prophesies—Ahaz reigns wickedly—Judah defeated by Israel with great Loss—Isaiah divinely commissioned to Ahaz—The King trusts in Assyria, and is disappointed—Hezekiah reigns—He reforms Abuses—Destroys Idolatry—And restores the Worship of Jehovah—Ceases to pay Tribute to the King of Assyria—Is threatened by him—Hezekiah's Sickness and Recovery—The Destruction of the Assyrian Army—Nahum prophesies—Conduct of the King to the Babylonish Ambassadors condemned—He is threatened—Manasseh succeeds to the Throne—He restores Idolatry—And persecutes unto Death the Worshipers of Jehovah—Subdued by the King of Assyria, and carried away Captive—He humbles himself, repents, is restored to his Kingdom, and reigns piously—He dies, and is succeeded by Amon—Judah invaded by Assyria—Delivered by Judith—Josiah reigns well—A Book of the Law found in the Temple—Josiah opposes the King of Egypt—Is slain—Jeremiah raised up to prophesy—Jehoahaz reigns wickedly—Is deposed by the King of Egypt, who places Jehoiakim on the Throne—He also reigns wickedly, and is succeeded by Jehoiachin, who is deposed by Nebuchadnezzar, who appoints Zedekiah King—He also does Evil—He is finally deposed, and Jerusalem destroyed.—Chronological Table. .Page 301

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF THE HEBREWS DURING THE CAPTIVITY.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE RELIGION OF THE HEBREWS DURING THE CAPTIVITY.

THE FALL OF THE HEBREW NATION A DIVINE INFLICTION on Account of general Transgression—Idolatry introduced by Jehoram—Fostered by succeeding Kings—And, notwithstanding the Efforts of some pious Princes, becomes paramount in Influence—The

This imposition upon the aged and afflicted father had been but just completed, when Esau returned to claim the promised benediction ; and found, to his great astonishment and grief, that his brother had previously received the "blessing," and that Isaac, although feeling he had been deceived, also felt, that the predictive promise which he had given was from heaven, and that he could not revoke it ; but, on the contrary, whilst laboring to bless Esau, was constrained to confirm the benediction previously given to Jacob.

It is almost impossible to read the whole account, as given by the sacred writer, without a strong desire to know by what means it was intended to bring about the purposes of Heaven in this case. The deceit of Rebekah, and the profane falsehood of Jacob, were alike unnecessary to accomplish the divine intention. How, then, would it have been effected ? This is not known. Human frailty and sin are here seen unitedly intruding into the counsel and work of God ; and, instead of beholding the way and will of Heaven in all its inherent purity, we have to contemplate another scene, which, although overshadowed with evil, is full of interest,—the wisdom of God overruling and controlling the weakness, and even the wickedness, of man, for the accomplishment of his own great and gracious designs.

Esau having threatened the life of Jacob, on account of his conduct in this instance, Rebekah advises him to retire for a time ; and therefore suggests to Isaac the great impropriety of allowing Jacob to marry into any Canaanitish family. Isaac enters fully into her opinion, and charges Jacob not to take a wife of the daughters of the land, but to go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel his mother's brother, and to take a wife from thence. In the position which Jacob now occupied, as heir to the promises, this arrangement was necessary. If his family was destined to expel all these nations, and inherit the land, it was only proper that he should form no immediate relationship with them. It is highly probable that Isaac regarded the importance of the case in this aspect ; for, immediately after charging Jacob to go to Padan-aram, he said unto him, "And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people ; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee ; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham." Gen. xxviii, 3, 4. Thus did Isaac identify the journey of Jacob, and his marriage into the Abrahamic family, with his participation in the fulfillment of the promise made to the father of the faithful.

The humble and solitary manner in which this journey was performed, has very naturally excited surprise. We see here the heir of a princely house sent out to perform, on foot and unattended, a journey of four

hundred miles through a country partly uninhabited, and partly occupied or roamed over by nomadic tribes, who, to a great extent, were rude and lawless. When it is considered that Isaac inherited the great property and influence of Abraham, this fact appears remarkable. But it is illustrative of the manners of the age. At this early period there appear to have existed none of those aristocratic distinctions which, in after ages, rendered labor derogatory to rank. The whole testimony of sacred and profane history is as uniform as it is clear and explicit on this point. When the angels in human form came to Abraham, he "hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hastened to dress it." Genesis xviii, 6, 7. Similar conduct is uniformly exhibited by the heroes of Homer, and, indeed, in all the records of early ages. This, to a great extent, accounts for the singular manner in which Jacob performed his journey.

It is probable that this young man, as he pursued his lonely way, was the subject of very peculiar and conflicting emotions. He had acquired all that was externally necessary for the fulfillment of the prediction delivered before his birth; but it was by means which rested heavily on his conscience; the more so, as they rendered necessary his exile from his father's house. In this state of mind he traveled about forty miles from Beersheba, and rested for the night at Bethel. This place is about eight miles north of Jerusalem, and was at this time called Luz. Here Jacob, having placed a stone for his pillow, lay down to sleep; and while he slept he had a dream, in which he saw a ladder set up on the earth, which reached to heaven, and upon which, in his sight, the angels of God ascended and descended; while Jehovah stood above it, and, in the language already quoted, assured him of his particular interest in the Abrahamic covenant, and that all its promised blessings should be fulfilled in and through him.

This vision holds a most important rank amongst the means by which the divine purposes with respect to the Abrahamic family were developed and brought into practical operation. It is not necessary to refer to the evangelical allusions which ingenious men have endeavored to discover in this significant representation. Whatever spiritual meaning it might have been intended to suggest in after-ages, there can be no doubt that it was in a wonderful manner adapted to afford solace to Jacob's feelings, under the peculiar circumstances in which he found himself.

That his lonely and isolated condition impressed upon his mind all the occurrences which had recently agitated his family, and led to this journey, may easily be imagined. Now for the first time separated from a

kind father and a tender mother, cast upon the wide world, and lying down alone in the open air, as the darkness of night gathered about him, he would naturally be perplexed with doubt as to his future course;—would feel anxious to know whether the position in which he nominally stood, attained as it had been on his part by such unworthy means, would be recognized and confirmed by the God of his fathers; and whether his present journey would be crowned with a successful issue, or followed by disastrous results. In this state of mind Jacob slept, and was favored with the vision already described. In endeavoring to apprehend the effect which this representation would have upon the mind of Jacob, it should be remembered that he had been from his childhood familiar with the doctrines of providence, and of the ministry of angels: the history of his father's house was rich in the application of these, and the family conversation must have often turned on heavenly interposition and angelic visitation. Jacob would therefore at once perceive, in the visionary scene before him, a fresh proof that, lonely as he was upon earth, he was not forgotten on high. The ladder would at once indicate the intimate connection which subsisted between earth and heaven. The heavenly ones who were going up and down, would bring vividly before his mind the angelic agency employed to carry out the purposes of God among men. How, in the presence of this teaching picture, did he regard his recent conduct? The truth thus clearly indicated frowned condemnation on his want of faith, and on the undue hastiness and duplicity which were consequent. He saw how foolishly and sinfully he had obtruded himself upon the purpose of God, and thus had periled, instead of promoting, his real interest. But, besides this representation, Jacob heard the Lord himself address him from heaven, saying, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; . . . and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxviii, 13, 14. This communication met his case: he had been reproved, he is now comforted and encouraged. The representation showed the folly and wickedness of his conduct; he is now assured, that, notwithstanding all this, the divine purpose remains unaltered, and he is therefore recognized by God himself as the heir to the great promises which had been made to Abraham. But while this is done, he is very plainly told that he does not owe this position to the exercise of his own crooked policy: no; it is the gift of God: "To thee will I give it."

It would not be right to dismiss this part of the narrative without a passing reference to its religious effect upon the mind of Jacob. On rising in the morning, and reviewing the objects presented to his mind during the visions of the night, he exclaimed, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful

is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Gen. xxviii, 16, 17. It appears that the revelations of the night had affected his mind very deeply with a conviction of the divine presence and power. Under this influence all his plans, purposes, and strength seem to have sunk into nothing, and he was left fully conscious of being entirely dependent upon Divine Providence. His mind being thus drawn off from earthly confidence, he endeavors to find refuge and hope in the blessing of God. He therefore "vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God." Gen. xxviii, 20, 21. Thus Jacob cultivated a sincere confidence in God. Were these his first efforts of the kind? Before leaving the scene of this remarkable visitation, he "took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-el." Gen. xxviii, 18, 19. This was in accordance with the manners of the age. Moses repeatedly expressed his grateful remembrance in a similar manner; and such pillars, or perpendicular stones, consecrated to some religious purpose or object, were common in those ages, probably among all nations.

From Bethel Jacob traveled forward, and arrived safely at Haran, where he was kindly received and lodged by Laban, his mother's brother. If it were necessary to exhibit at length the personal history of this patriarch, his stay at Haran would furnish materials for lengthened inquiry and observation; but as it is our object to dwell only on those parts of his personal history which stood connected with the development of the divine will in regard to his posterity, it will be sufficient to state that Jacob successively married Leah and Rachel, the daughters of Laban, for whom he served their father fourteen years. Afterward various arrangements were made for the remuneration of his service, in all of which Laban seems to have displayed great covetousness, and Jacob consummate knowledge and craft. The latter, favored by Providence, was uniformly successful in this protracted contest. Jacob had eleven sons and one daughter; and although he came to Haran without any substance, the sacred historian informs us that "the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid-servants, and men-servants, and camels, and asses." Gen. xxx, 43.

This prosperity of Jacob was not at all agreeable to the family of Laban. His sons complained that their father's property had been abstracted; and "Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before." Gen. xxxi, 2. In these painful and embarrassing circumstances, the elected patriarch was not left to the guidance of his own wisdom: "The Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto

the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred ; and I will be with thee." Verse 8. Instructed by this communication, he saw the necessity for extreme caution in proceeding to act upon it. He therefore sent and called Rachel and Leah unto him in the field, and there justified his conduct, and informed them of the divine command which he had received. His wives fully entered into his views, and expressed themselves strongly respecting the covetous conduct of their father, saying, "Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not counted of him strangers? For he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money;" adding, for the encouragement of their husband, "Now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do." Verses 14-16. Jacob, rejoicing that his way was thus far opened, resolved immediately to obey the divine command. He therefore "rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels," (verse 17,) and with all his cattle and other property commenced his journey from Padan-aram towards the home of his father Isaac, in the land of Canaan.

Influenced by prudential motives, Jacob had taken advantage of the absence of Laban, who was at a distance superintending his sheep-shearing, to collect his family and his property, and begin his journey. When the father-in-law returned, and was made acquainted with the circumstances, he was greatly enraged; and having quickly collected his servants, pursued with eager haste Jacob and his family. From the temper in which this pursuit was begun, and the manner in which Laban conducted himself throughout the affair, there can be little doubt that he intended to inflict some serious injury on the patriarch, or to make some aggression upon his property. This was prevented by a special interposition of Providence, the Lord appearing for this purpose unto Laban, in a vision by night. One cause of the anger of Laban, which rendered a collision between the parties imminent, arose out of the conduct of Rachel, who, without the knowledge of her husband, had secreted and taken with her the *teraphim* ("gods") of her father. (See *Appendix*, note 5.) When Laban charged Jacob with this theft, he indignantly denied it; and as, after searching, they could not be found, Laban returned to his home, and Jacob continued his journey.

Although this danger had been so happily averted, a much greater one arose in apprehension before him. He did not shrink from an interview with Laban, because a strong consciousness of rectitude sustained him. But how could he meet his brother? In approaching his father's house, the sins of his youth pressed heavily upon his heart. He recollected his conduct towards Esau, and felt that he had merited his displeasure. These apprehensions were aggravated by reports which had reached him: for he had been told that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men. He naturally expected that the object of this

movement was to carry into effect the threat which had been thrown out when he so clandestinely obtained his father's blessing. All this deeply afflicted Jacob, and led him to make earnest prayer to God for protection and deliverance. His prayer was heard, and Jehovah graciously met his case by special revelations; first at Mahanaim, about sixteen miles from Mount Gilead, concerning which it is recorded, "The angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host." Gen. xxxii, 1, 2. No more information is given as to the appearance that was presented to Jacob, nor is its object explained: it cannot, however, be doubted that its intention was to strengthen his faith in God, and to confirm the promises which had been made to him at Bethel.

Distressed and embarrassed on account of the approach of Esau, Jacob removed, only four miles further, to Penuel. Here he arranged his substance and his family, and placed them in separate companies, so that he might, if possible, appease his brother, and at the same time afford those who were dearest to him the best opportunity of escaping, in case of danger; but, although Jacob had done all for the protection of his family that the greatest prudence and the most consummate ability could effect, he was still troubled, and therefore rose very early, long before day. Having tried the ford Jabbok, and found it passable, he sent over the several companies in order, himself remaining behind. While here, an event occurred as remarkable in its character, and, from the brevity and obscurity of the narration, as difficult to understand, as any which we find recorded in the sacred Scriptures. It is said that "Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there." Gen. xxxii, 24-29.

Whatever may be the full meaning of this remarkable account, it cannot be doubted that the significant alteration of Jacob's name, and the blessing which he obtained, dissipated all his apprehension in respect of Esau. (See *Appendix*, note 6.) But, although that danger might have been the primary cause of this struggle, it appears certain that the results went far beyond its removal. And as at Bethel we see the incipient exercise of Jacob's faith, so here its matured power is shown; and the patriarch ever afterward stands before us, saved from all that was indi-

cated by the term "Jacob," and uniformly evincing, by the practice of elevated piety, that he had obtained princely power with God.

Strong in this blessing, Jacob went forward and met his brother. Instead of anger and destruction, the meeting was characterized by the greatest conciliation and affection. Having exchanged the most cordial greeting, Esau returned to Mount Seir, and Jacob went on to Sichem, each feeling for the other a respectful and tender love.

Jacob, having returned to Canaan, appears there as the heir to the promises which had been made unto Abraham and Isaac. This was now admitted; for Esau had taken up his residence at Mount Seir, while Jacob with his family continued "in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles," looking for the fulfillment of the promise. Heb. xi, 9. At this time he was favored with another special revelation from God. While he dwelt at Bethel, a place rich in associations as the scene of his first intercourse with heaven, God appeared to him again, and confirmed the change of his name from Jacob to Israel, and assured him that his promise should be fulfilled in the multiplication of his seed, and in their having that land for a possession.

Thus far the prospect presented to the patriarch and his family was most cheering. But they must have been well aware, that, however great the destiny to which they were appointed, the prophetic communication made to Abraham had, by interposing a dark night of subjection and sorrow, thrown the predicted blessing far into the distance. God had said unto Abraham, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." Gen. xv, 13, 14, 16.

This prediction was now to be fulfilled; and perhaps no part of Holy Scripture contains a more remarkable display of divine interposition in human affairs.

The first link in the great chain of causes which contributed to accomplish this divine purpose, was an amiable frailty of Jacob,—his great fondness for his young son Joseph, and the unwise parade of this feeling before the whole family. "Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him." Gen. xxxvii, 3, 4.

But the antipathy which the brethren of Joseph had formed against him, was greatly increased by his relating some dreams which seemed to point him out as destined to occupy a pre-eminent position, even over

his father's house. It so happened, that while the other sons of Jacob were feeding their flocks at a distance, and ruminating on their father's partiality, and the ominous character of their brother's dreams, Joseph, who had been sent by Jacob to inquire after their welfare, drew near unto them. His presence at this moment roused their angry passions to the utmost, and they at once plotted his destruction. While, however, they were divided in opinion respecting his murder, the opportune arrival of a caravan of Ishmaelites, journeying from Gilead to Egypt, induced them to alter their purpose; so they sold him to those itinerant merchants for twenty pieces of silver, and by them he was carried into Egypt, and sold to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard.

The whole history of Joseph is told by Moses with such inimitable grace and beauty, that it is sufficient here briefly to say, that Joseph conducted himself so wisely in the house of Potiphar, as to be intrusted with the entire management of all his affairs; until, being falsely accused by his mistress, he was thrown into prison. Here also he conducted himself with so much judgment and discretion, that the keeper of the prison intrusted the prisoners to his care. While he was thus occupied, two officers of Pharaoh's household, who had offended their lord, and were confined in the prison, had very remarkable dreams, which greatly affected them. Joseph, sympathizing with their affliction, elicited the tenor of their visions, and at once explained their import; in one case predicting an early restoration to honor, and in the other a miserable and painful death. In three days these interpretations were justified,—the chief butler was restored to his place, and the chief baker was hanged.

Although Joseph had earnestly requested the intercession of his prison-companion, when he should be restored to honor and influence, the chief butler in his prosperity did not remember Joseph, but forgot him, and he remained two years longer in the prison-house. At the end of this time, Pharaoh himself had two dreams, which gave him great uneasiness. The wise men and magicians of Egypt having failed in their efforts to give an interpretation, the chief butler informed Pharaoh of the Hebrew youth who had so correctly interpreted his own dream, and so accurately predicted his restoration. This led to the introduction of Joseph into the presence of Pharaoh, to whom he not only gave a clear and ample explanation of the import of his visions, which involved the destiny of the whole Egyptian nation; but also tendered him some wise advice as to the best means of securing the greatest amount of good from the promised years of plenty, and of averting the evil of the threatened period of want.

These circumstances led to the promotion of Joseph to be governor of the whole land of Egypt, all its resources and interests being fully subjected to his direction and control. The vigorous administration

of this young Hebrew produced many changes which might, in connection with other subjects, deserve investigation ; but among these it will be necessary here to refer only to the location of the family of Israel in the land of Egypt. The famine having driven the sons of Jacob into this country to buy corn, they were recognized by their brother ; who ultimately sent for the aged patriarch and his children, with all their cattle, and located them under the immediate auspices of Pharaoh, in a district of Egypt most favorable to the support of their numerous flocks. Here they rapidly increased in numbers and in wealth until the death of Joseph, and for many years after that event.

It is important to observe that, during this time, the Israelites, although multiplied to a considerable tribe, never united with the Egyptian people, so as to form an integral part of the population. They not only maintained their distinct and isolated character, but continued to cherish with undiminished intensity their hope in the promises which God had made unto their fathers. Just before Jacob died, he not only charged his sons that they should not bury him in Egypt, but should carry up his body and deposit it in the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah had been buried ; but, in delivering to them his prophetic benediction, he clearly recognized their possession of the land which God had promised to give to his seed, and spoke of the relative localities which the several tribes should afterward occupy. In this remarkable prophetic effusion the dying patriarch predictively refers to the future condition of the descendants of his twelve sons.

Reuben is deprived of his birthright on account of his crime. Simeon and Levi are denounced for their cruelty in the case of Sichem. In reference to the latter of these tribes, although the malediction was literally fulfilled, it was by divine mercy changed into a blessing. The predictions respecting the other tribes are full and explicit. Judah is celebrated for power, and invested with regal dignity. The portion of Zebulun is unambiguously declared to be on the coast of the sea : it is added, "His border shall be unto Zidon ;" which, even at this early time, was an ancient and powerful city : the district thus indicated would therefore be well known, as lying within the country which God had promised to give unto the seed of Abraham. The tenor of the predictions respecting the other tribes was of a similar character. Dan was celebrated for judgment. Of Gad it is said, that his portion should be infested with robbers, but that he should ultimately destroy them ; while Joseph and Benjamin are declared to be highly exalted with blessing, and richly endowed with power and bravery.

Nor did the deep interest which the Israelites felt in the land of Canaan, pass away with the death of their father. Joseph, who, from

his having been greatly exalted in Egypt, was the only one peculiarly exposed to influences calculated to produce this result, is known to have been perfectly free from it. When he was dying, he solemnly reiterated his faith in the divine declaration ; and, as it might not have been prudent in his brethren to carry his body at once to Machpelah, as they had conveyed that of Jacob, he charged them not to bury him, until the promise of God was fulfilled ; for he said, "I die : and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Gen. l, 24.

The confidence that God would fulfill his promise, and give this people possession of Canaan, did not therefore arise in their minds under the fierce and cruel persecution to which they were afterward subjected ; on the contrary, it was, throughout their entire history, the sum of all their earthly prospects, the prominent element of their religious faith ; in the strength of which they kept the bones of Joseph till the expiration of the time predicted, when Moses took them with him out of Egypt : "for Joseph had straitly sworn the children of Israel." Exod. xiii, 19.

The inspired penman proceeds to state, that "there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph." Exod. i, 8. There had probably been a change of dynasty, or "of men and measures," so that the eminent services of the Hebrew statesman were no longer regarded. Under these circumstances, the rapidly increasing numbers and growing wealth of the Israelites excited jealousy : this would be strengthened by the studied isolation which they maintained, and the peculiar feeling and hope which they were known to cherish of a separate national existence. Hence the Egyptian council of state said, "Come on, let us deal wisely with them ; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land." Verse 10. From the concluding words of this passage it is certain that the expectation and desire of the Israelites to leave Egypt was no secret : and the primary motive to coercion appears to have been their retention in abject bondage. To enforce this, they were first subjected to harsh treatment, which gradually increased in severity, until it ripened into the most grievous cruelty and murderous persecution.

Here, then, we have one instance (many of which are found in ancient history) in which men, while struggling to defeat the predictions of Jehovah, unconsciously by their conduct work out their fulfillment. The Egyptians had heard that the God of the Hebrews had promised them a separate country, and an independent national existence, and they mightily exerted themselves to frustrate these predictions ; but they did not know, or did not recollect, that God had also said unto Abraham, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is

not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them." Genesis xv, 18. Through this affliction the Hebrew people were now called to pass. The nature of their labors is particularly described by the sacred historian. He says, "And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor." Exodus i, 13, 14.

Those who are acquainted with the subject, are aware that the ancient history of Egypt is to be read in the numerous and elaborate monumental remains of that country; and it is a curious and remarkable circumstance, that the Scriptural account of this bondage derives the strongest confirmation from this source. On this subject a learned author observes: "As an unanswerable proof of this we refer to * the tomb of Rek-sharé, the chief architect of the temples and palaces of Thebes, under Pharaoh Moeris. Never, perhaps, has so striking a pictorial comment as this upon the sacred text been before recovered. The physiognomy of the Jews it is impossible to mistake; and the splashes of clay with which their bodies are covered, the air of close and intense labor that is conveyed by the grouping on the left side of the picture, and, above all, the Egyptian task-master seated with his heavy baton, whose remorseless blows would doubtless visit the least relaxation of the slaves he was driving from their wearisome and toilsome task of making bricks, and spreading them to dry in the burning sun of Egypt, give a vivid impression of the exactitude of the Scripture phrase, 'All their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor.' The inscription at the top of the picture, to the right, reads, 'Captives brought by his majesty, [Moeris,] to build the temple of the great God.' This means either that Moeris was the king 'that arose, that knew not Joseph, and that reduced the children of Israel to servitude;' or, more probably, that the family or gang of Israelites which are here represented, had been marched up from Goshen, and attached especially to the building of the temples at Thebes."—*Antiquities of Egypt*, p. 220. (See *Appendix*, note 7.)

The sacred historian, however, states, that this oppression did not answer its intended end. For although it was as extensive as it was severe, the Hebrews being compelled to build "for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses," yet, "the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew," Exod. i, 11, 12; until, disappointed and enraged, and apprehensive that the people whom he had so grievously oppressed would ultimately acquire numerical strength sufficient to break his yoke, the king of Egypt had recourse to one of the vilest

* A sketch accompanies this in the work from which the extract is taken.

acts of tyranny ever recorded in history,—he commanded that all male children born of Hebrew mothers should be immediately destroyed. The severity of this diabolical enactment, as is usual in such cases, tended to limit its operation; and many of the devoted infants, if not most of them, escaped.

The first part of the object of this Introduction is thus completed. The entire series of promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, have been collected and considered. From these it has been ascertained, that the house of Israel was divinely appointed to become a wealthy, powerful, and independent nation; that this nation should obtain possession of Canaan as its permanent inheritance; and that the destiny of the world, in some important sense, hung upon the accomplishment of this purpose, inasmuch as in this *seed* all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

The development of this great plan has been traced through the personal and family history of the patriarchs. In doing this, an uninterrupted course of Divine interpositions has been seen, guiding, controlling, subduing all influences to the Divine will, until individuals and families are lost in the numerous population of a great people. It is further observable, that, at the close of this section of the inquiry, this people is found in a state of degradation and bondage which would appear to blast all the hopes that had been raised, and to frustrate the entire plan which had been predictively set forth, had it not been that this precise state of servitude and affliction had been clearly predicted as a part of the Divine purpose, as a portion of the way through which the Lord was to lead his elected people.

II. The continued series of miraculous interpositions which preceded and which effected the exodus, will now be considered.

The rise of the Jewish people, their national greatness, and their covenant relation to Jehovah, were all, in the Divine purpose and economy, inseparably associated with the grand scheme of human redemption, and with the means by which it was to be enunciated to the world. If these views are correct, then it will follow, that the suffering condition of the Israelites in Egypt was calculated to call forth the mightiest displays of Divine wisdom and power. For not only did the emancipation of the elected people require such interposition, but it was also demanded by their religious condition, and that of the world, both with respect to that time and the future. The human family had at this period become fearfully infected with idolatry: Egypt in particular was remarkable for this sin. Here polytheism had been reduced to a system, and had become the established religion of a numerous and cultivated population. The pernicious influence of Egypt had, in this respect, extended far beyond her territorial limits: this nation was the teacher of distant coun-

tries in that species of iniquity. In these circumstances it became obviously necessary that the people selected to be the Church of God should be delivered from bondage, and established in an independent position, in a manner which should most strikingly attest the futility and folly of idolatry, as well as the certain existence and the infinite perfections of the eternal Jehovah.

Nor was this interposition less required with respect to the future. Many remarkable displays of divine wisdom and power had been made to the patriarchs, and much sterling religious truth had been revealed prior to this date ; and all this stood in remote connection with the development of the great plan of human redemption. Now, however, the foundation-stone of the temple of grace was to be laid : from this time, the Hebrew Church was intended to be the seat of the divine worship ; as a great and visible institution, it was called to show forth the power and goodness of God, until Messiah, coming through it, should manifest the fullness of redeeming grace, and enlighten the whole world with his glory. It seemed, consequently, necessary that all the means used for the deliverance of Israel, and the organization of the nation, should be marked by signal manifestations of the wisdom and power of God. Those, therefore, who regard the miracles wrought in Egypt as limited in their object to the deliverance of the Israelites, take a very defective view of the subject. Not only was this intended, but the miracles were also designed to make a glorious revelation of God to the afflicted Israelites, sufficient to call forth and confirm their faith ; to confound and put to shame the human power, earthly wisdom, and impure idolatry of Egypt, and of every other heathen nation ; and to begin a course of miraculous interpositions and gracious influences which should ultimately be crowned with the glorious dispensation of the Holy Spirit.

It pleased God to raise up a suitable instrumentality for the accomplishment of this great design. A series of providential operations was accordingly begun, by which this purpose was completely effected. Amram, a grandson of Levi, had married a relation ; and of this couple a son and a daughter were born before the edict for the murder of all male children. After this law came into operation, another male child was born ; and this infant displaying unusual attractions, the parents exerted themselves to the utmost to preserve his life, and succeeded for three months. But either on account of some suspicion being entertained, or a more rigid search being made, a further concealment was impossible : so his mother, as a last resource, prepared a small vessel, rendered it water-proof by means of pitch, and, having placed the babe in it, laid the ark among the flags on the brink of the Nile. It was found by the daughter of Pharaoh, who had the child carefully nursed, and brought up as her own. By these means the young Hebrew was

avored with an education best adapted to call forth his noble qualities of mind and body. All antiquity attests that in both these respects he possessed very remarkable endowments.

Numerous tales are told by the rabbins, and by other ancient writers, of the great learning and splendid achievements of Moses in early life; and, among them, how, at the command of Pharaoh, he repelled an invasion of Egypt by the king of Ethiopia, and, having defeated his army, pursued him into his own country, and finished the campaign by taking the Ethiopian capital.

Importance cannot be attached to these romantic relations. There can, however, be no doubt that the young Hebrew distinguished himself both by learning and by prowess. The explicit declaration of Stephen, delivered under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost, does not leave this point dubitable. Speaking of Moses, long before his mission to his brethren, and while he was yet in the house of Pharaoh, he says of him, "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds." Acts vii, 22. It may be necessary to notice the import of this statement. To be "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" at this time was to possess an acquaintance with the most important amount of knowledge. It was to obtain a small portion of this that Plato, Eudoxus, and other Greek sages, made long and dangerous journeys and voyages. Moses was therefore one of the most learned men of his day. But, more than this, "he was mighty in words and in deeds." He was "mighty in words." Much elaborate and superficial criticism has been employed to reconcile this with the statement of Moses himself,—that he was "not eloquent," but "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." The truth seems to be, that Moses was not a very elegant or very rapid speaker; a defect which might have been exaggerated in his own account by his great modesty, and his extreme reluctance to accept the vocation assigned him. He may yet have been, and certainly was, eminent for clear, sound, powerful speech. The language of the inspired deacon is therefore fully justified. Of his deeds in early life no authentic details can be given; but here, also, the statement of Stephen in all its parts is undoubtedly correct.

But, whatever intellectual power, learned acquirements, or personal prowess united to constitute and elevate the character of Moses, they did not form the finest feature of his greatness: this is to be found in his faith. It was this which led him to renounce all the honor and aggrandizement which had been placed within his reach, and to prefer affliction in company with the people of God. This noble decision does not appear to have received that attention which its importance merits. Moses, notwithstanding his adoption into the family of Pharaoh, was well ac-

quainted with his Hebrew origin, and equally so with the religious faith and predicted destiny of the house of his fathers. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a position more calculated to test an enlightened and ingenuous mind than that in which he at this time stood. Elevated to prominent dignity in the Egyptian court, not only honor, but pleasure and wealth, spread their fascinating attractions before him. And his mind clearly apprehended all their variety and extent. But, on the other hand, he felt his natural connection with the Hebrews in all their persecution and affliction, and identified his condition and destiny with theirs. Under the influence of a strong faith, which realized the full accomplishment of the Divine promise, not only in the temporal elevation of the Israelites, but also in the ultimate and more glorious redemption of the world by Christ, he nobly chose to be a Hebrew, rather than an Egyptian; to be a sufferer and a servant, rather than to be a son of Pharaoh's daughter.

It is a singular and interesting fact, that we are fully informed of the aspect in which these things were presented to his mind so as to induce this decision. He regarded Egypt as opposed to God, its fascinations as the pleasures of sin, its wealth as lying under the divine malediction; while the affliction of the Hebrews was recognized by him as the sufferings of the people of God, and their shame as the reproach which rested upon the great and gracious purposes of Heaven. Looking, therefore, to the recompense of reward, he, with all the lofty-mindedness of a man of God, boldly renounced the adoption of which he had been the subject, and claimed his interest in the affliction and destiny of the sons of Abraham.

There is reason to believe that, even at this early period, Moses, having made this sacrifice, had received an impression that he should be the instrument of delivering his brethren from their cruel bondage. Under this influence, to use the nervous language of Stephen, "It came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel." Acts vii, 23. He was therefore prepared, to some extent, to interest himself in their deliverance, and soon had an opportunity of manifesting his zeal. Having looked on their burdens, marked well, and with painful emotion, the severity of their toil and privation, he saw "an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren," (probably a Levite,) and, thinking himself unobserved, he espoused the cause of the injured, and slew the oppressor. Having thus begun his active interference, he went out the following day, and, finding two Hebrews striving together, endeavored to reconcile them. But he who did his neighbor wrong, repelled his interposition, and charged him with the murder of the Egyptian on the preceding day.

Moses hoped that the impression made on his own mind had been

accompanied with similar conviction on the mind of his Hebrew brethren. But their conduct convinced him of his error; and, presuming that this report would soon reach the ears of Pharaoh, he fled from Egypt, and dwelt in the land of Midian. In this apprehension the son of Amram was not mistaken: the fact was told Pharaoh, and he "sought to slay Moses." How mysterious to the reason of man are the ways of God! Moses, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, had renounced his princely dignity, and dared the danger and reproach of sympathizing with Hebrew affliction, and even of defending his oppressed brethren. In doing this, he had calculated on his immediate recognition by them as the deliverer of Israel; but, instead of such reception, his conduct is impeached, and he who might have been an Egyptian prince, but who had piously chosen the fate of a Hebrew, is doomed to wander an outcast and an exile in a strange land.

Moses remained in the land of Midian forty years; and so long did the Israelites in Egypt continue in their suffering. At the expiration of this period, a miraculous communication was made to him at the foot of Horeb, when he was specially appointed by God to return to Egypt as the instrument of his people's redemption. He is now reluctant and cautious; he has experienced the incredulity of those to whom he is sent, and labors to excuse himself. Forty years before, when less prepared, Moses would have readily undertaken the task; now, when chastened and disciplined for the work, he shrinks from the enterprise.

At length Moses obeyed the divine command, and journeyed toward Egypt; and, as had been predicted, he met his brother Aaron in the way. Having made known to him the revelations which he had received from the Lord, they went together, and, assembling all the elders of the children of Israel, "Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshiped." *Exod. iv, 30, 31.*

By this gracious interposition, Jehovah recognized the Israelites as his own peculiar people, under the covenant which he had made with their fathers. In this character, as their King, (and not as the God of the whole earth, interposing on behalf of a part of his people that were oppressed,) he sent Moses as his ambassador to Pharaoh. The message delivered to the Egyptian monarch on this occasion was simply this: "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness," *Exod. v, 1*; a demand which the Egyptian king rejected with haughty contempt.

It is worthy of remark, that, on this occasion, Moses wrought no miracle, and uttered no threatening. He made an urgent, but at the same

time an humble and respectful, application to the sovereign of Egypt in the name of Jehovah, and was refused. Pharaoh did not satisfy himself with rejecting the request of Moses ; but, regarding this application as a proof that the national spirit of the Hebrews had not been sufficiently broken by their toils, he greatly increased their burdens, and sent them again to their labor. This aggravated affliction induced the people to murmur against Moses and Aaron ; and their reproaches led Moses to seek refuge in earnest prayer to God. In answer to this supplication, the Almighty, in a fuller and more explicit manner, declared his determination to deliver the Israelites "by a strong hand," and to confirm the covenant that he had made with Abraham, by being their God, and taking them for his people. When, however, Moses reported this gracious assurance to the children of Israel, they hearkened not to his words, being overwhelmed with anguish of spirit on account of their excessive labors and sufferings. Discouraged by this conduct, Moses again appeared before God, and was by him again sent unto Pharaoh to make another formal demand for the liberation of Israel. On this occasion the "Lord spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying, When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for you : then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent." *Exod. vii, 8, 9.*

This is one of the most important passages in the writings of Moses. The Scriptures hitherto give us no intimation of any miracles having been wrought by human agency ; and it is remarkable that the first allusion to such superhuman acts, as evidence of the truth of a communication delivered in the name of God, is supposed to be made by an idolatrous king. This fact appears to be conclusive as to two points of great importance. First, it shows that, in the theology of Egypt, a miracle was considered a suitable and sufficient proof of the truth of any message or demand put forth in the name of God. It cannot be supposed that Pharaoh invented this test for the first time on this occasion. It must, therefore, have been a recognized element in the religion of Egypt, that if any man claimed to speak in the name of God, he should be prepared to sustain that character by performing works beyond the power of mere humanity to effect. Secondly, it seems equally certain that this doctrine never could have existed if no real or pretended miracles had been displayed for such purpose. The prompt and pointed demand which Pharaoh is supposed to make, not only shows that he held *proof by miracles* as an abstract doctrine, but that it was a test usually applied in such cases ; and Moses and Aaron are consequently forewarned that he is sure to make this demand, and instructed how to act in such an emergency. (*See Appendix, note 8.*)

Thus directed, the Hebrew brothers again appeared before the king,

and, on his making the expected demand, Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. What was the immediate result of this miracle? Did Pharaoh and his servants feel so surprised and terrified at this marvelous transformation, as at once to admit the power of Jehovah, and the divine mission of his servants? The narrative exhibits nothing of the kind. The king of Egypt and his council appear quite prepared for the event: the wise men, the magicians, and the sorcerers are called in, and they imitate the miracle; for they also "cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." *Exod. vii, 12.* This issue clearly indicated the nature of the struggle which had commenced. It is well known, from the hieroglyphics, that the serpent was the most expressive symbol of divinity, and under this form the gods of Egypt were often represented and worshiped. God himself clearly states, that, in this work, he was engaged in opposing and defeating the powers of the gods of Egypt: "Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment," *Exod. xii, 12*; and the enlightened men who saw and heard of these miracles formed the same opinion. When Moses related to his father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, Jethro said, "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them." *Exod. xviii, 11.* This interposition on behalf of the Israelites was, therefore, not only a display of the might of God as their King, for the purpose of controlling the will and breaking the power of the proud sovereign who held them in slavish subjection; it was no less a manifestation of Jehovah, as the God of the Hebrews, confronting and defeating all the excited power of the gods of Egypt, and putting them to shame.

It appears absolutely necessary to take this broad view of the subject, in order to obtain any consistent interpretation of the narrative. Regarded in this aspect, the transformation of the rod, and the action of the serpent, instead of appearing as unmeaning wonders, stand before us as great miracles, remarkable for their appropriateness and significance. Moses and Aaron appear before Pharaoh, and in the name of Jehovah demand the liberation of the Hebrews. Pharaoh requires them to prove that they have been thus sent from God, by working some miracle in attestation of their mission. This request was responded to; Aaron casts his rod upon the ground, and it becomes a serpent. At the sight of this superhuman act, Pharaoh evinces no amazement, his council betray no marks of surprise; the magicians, sorcerers, and wise men were called in, and "they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." *Exod. vii, 11, 12.* The plain

sense of the narrative clearly is, that what Moses had done the magicians also did. In this first essay, therefore, the servants of Jehovah appeared rather to disadvantage ; for what Moses and Aaron did in one instance, every one of the magicians effected severally ; what they did of set purpose, with design, and having had ample time for preparation, the magicians equaled, when called in suddenly and without notice or time for preparation. (See *Appendix*, note 9.) In one respect, only, the advantage appeared to lie with Moses and Aaron : their rod swallowed up those of the magicians. In order to apprehend the force and effect of this, it is necessary to call to mind " that the SERPENT was the most expressive symbol of divinity with the Egyptians."* This result of the miracle, therefore, plainly indicated the superior power of the God of the Hebrews. But, notwithstanding this, as the magicians had imitated the Hebrew prophets in the production of these creatures, Pharaoh was unsubdued, and refused to let the people go.

The first effort having proved ineffectual, Moses was again sent to Pharaoh in the morning as he went out to the water ; and, repeating, by divine authority, the demand for the release of the Israelites, was commissioned to announce that, in case of refusal, he would smite the waters of the river, and turn them into blood. This was done. The monarch was inflexible ; and all the waters of the river and of the pools were turned into blood, so that all the fish died, and the streams became putrid ; and the people were compelled to dig wells, because they could not drink of the water of the river. In this instance also did Jehovah execute judgment against the gods of Egypt. The Nile was not only regarded as the great source of the fertility of the land, and the noblest ornament of the country ; it was approached with sacred veneration, and worshiped as a god, as were also several of its finny inhabitants. Here, then, was another display of the miraculous power of God, apparently fully adapted to put to shame the idolatrous system of Egyptian worship. But in this case, as in the former, the magicians also " did so with their enchantments ;" so Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not hearken to the words of Moses and Aaron. This plague lasted seven days.

Again Moses was sent unto Pharaoh, and commanded to inflict another plague, of which, like the former, the Nile was the scene of action. The rod of Aaron having been stretched over the river and pools of water, a multitude of frogs were brought up over the land in such numbers, that the receptacles of provisions, the most retired rooms, even the bed-chambers, were polluted and infested with these creatures. Is it possible to conceive of a more pointed or painful rebuke of the reptile worship,

* Deane on the Serpent, p. 129. The worship of the serpent was, in the early history of Egypt, " an important and conspicuous part of her idolatry. The serpent entered into the Egyptian religion under all his characters,—AN EMBLEM OF DIVINITY, A CHARM, AN ORACLE, and a GOD." *Idem*, page 119.

for which Egypt had so early in its history become infamous? In this case, again, the magicians imitated the working of divine power: they also brought up frogs upon the land. It is remarkable that in each case they aimed at copying the works of Moses; they never appear to have endeavored to avert or remove the painful inflictions with which the country was visited. In the present instance, however, for the first time, Pharaoh submitted to solicit a removal of the plague; but, when relieved, he persisted in his refusal to liberate the oppressed people.

The third plague covered man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt with lice. This infliction fell on the priesthood with a violence, of which at present a very faint estimate can be formed. "To conceive the severity of this miracle, as a judgment on their idolatry, we must recollect their utter abhorrence of all kinds of vermin, and their extreme attention to external purity, above every other people perhaps that have hitherto existed on the face of the earth. On this head they were more particularly solicitous, when about to enter into the temples of their gods; for Herodotus informs us that their priests wore linen garments only that they might be daily washed, and, every third day, shaved every part of their bodies, to prevent *lice* or any species of impurity from adhering to those who were engaged in the service of the gods. This plague, therefore, whilst it lasted, rendered it impossible for them to perform any part of their idolatrous worship, without giving such offense to their deities as they imagined could never be forgiven. Hence we find, that, on the production of the *lice*, the priests and magicians perceived immediately from what hand the miracle had come; for it was probably as much from this circumstance, as from its exceeding their own art to imitate, that they exclaimed, 'This is the finger of God.'"—*Stackhouse's History of the Bible*, vol. i, p. 478.

Here, however, the power of the magicians terminated: they exerted themselves with their enchantments to bring forth lice; "*but they could not.*" Hitherto they had exercised a more than human power; but this now fails them, and they from henceforth admit that Moses and Aaron alone act under the influence of the power of God.

There is much uncertainty as to the instrument selected to inflict the fourth plague. Our translation calls them "flies." The original word is אַרְבֵּי, which comes from the term אֲרָב *arab*, "to be mingled." It has therefore been conjectured that, on this occasion, not one, but many kinds of harassing and destructive insects were employed to accomplish the divine purpose. Bochart, following the Septuagint, explains the original by *κυνόμυια*, "dog-fly," which is supposed to have been specially hateful to the Egyptians, because of their profound reverence for the god Anubis. But this opinion has been greatly shaken by Sir Gardiner Wilkinson, who has shown that Anubis had not the head of a

dog, but of a jackal. Still, as the dog was a sacred animal with the ancient Egyptians, Bochart's opinion has some weight. But, whatever may be the exact truth with respect to these points, it appears probable that this plague was intended as a curse on all the animal-worship of Egypt. This was so extensive, that a poisonous fly resting on all animals without distinction must have exhibited the weakness of these imaginary gods, and the folly of their worship, in the most affecting manner.—*Wilkinson's Ancient Egypt*, vol. v, p. 260.

It is further probable that the instrument of this afflictive visitation was itself a deity. Baalzebub, which signifies "the lord" or "god of flies," was the tutelary deity of Ekron in Philistia, a place near to Egypt, where he appears to have been worshiped as a defense against these noxious insects, as the Eleans adored Jupiter, whom they invoked against pestilential swarms of flies; and hence this supreme god of the heathens had the epithets of Ἀπόμυιος and Μυιῶδης, because he was supposed to expel flies and defend his worshipers against them. (See Dr. Adam Clarke, *in loc.*) And there is reason for believing that something very analogous to this obtained in Egypt. The genius of the lower country was worshiped under the resemblance of a winged asp. In this form it is sculptured on one of the tombs of the kings at Thebes.—*Wilkinson's Ancient Egypt*, vol. v, pp. 45, 81. Thus it is probable that, while this plague was spreading universal suffering and distress, and inducing the most terrible disorder upon the whole range of animal-worship, it was inflicted under a form which was extensively regarded with idolatrous veneration. How terrible were these visitations on a nation so proud of its power, wisdom, and religion as were the ancient Egyptians!

Under the operation of this plague, the first intimation is given of the land of Goshen, and the property of the Israelites, being exempted from the common calamity. As cattle constituted the principal possessions of the Hebrews, this was a most important distinction. It pointed out the object of the scourge, and greatly increased the weight of the plague, when all the cattle, and even the animal gods, of Egypt were sent writhing in torture, while, close by, the flocks and herds of Israel fed unmolested, and basked in enjoyment.

On this occasion Pharaoh began to feel the weight of the chastisement to which he had exposed himself and his people. He called Moses and Aaron, and gave them leave to sacrifice to their God, but not to leave the country. This elicited a reply from Moses which showed very clearly the prominence ascribed throughout the whole of this contest to animal-worship. He said, "It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: Lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?" *Exod. viii, 26*. This appears to refer to the fact that the

Egyptians at that time worshiped those animals which the Hebrews would have to sacrifice. It is indeed to be noticed, that an objection has been taken to this interpretation, on the ground that the Egyptians themselves practiced animal sacrifice. To this, however, it is quite a sufficient answer, that while some animals were held universally sacred, others were only worshiped in certain localities; so that an animal sacred in one district was sometimes slain in another. Moses certainly understood the case; and his answer appears to have been admitted as pertinent and proper.

The fifth plague appears still further illustrative of the great fact, that in these inflictions God had special and vindictive regard to the abominable system of animal-worship. On this occasion a very grievous murrain destroyed the cattle of the Egyptians. When it is remembered that the death of one of their sacred animals was regarded as a great public calamity, what must have been the effect of this wide-spread ruin? an effect greatly aggravated by the knowledge that, while in all Egypt the objects of their idolatry were perishing before their eyes, in Goshen the property of the Israelites remained in health and safety. These successive visitations were not only severe punishments, but must have tended to alienate the minds of the Egyptians from their impure faith. There is reason to believe that this people were peculiarly accessible to such an influence. Plutarch tells us, that whenever any great drought, or pestilential disease, or other extraordinary calamity, happened amongst them, it was customary for the Egyptian priests to select some of the sacred animals, and, having conducted them with all silence to a dark place, to terrify them with threats, and afterward, if the disorder continued, to devote them to death. What events ever happened in Egyptian history so likely to call forth this strange procedure as the plagues with which they were at this time visited?

The next infliction is worthy of very serious attention, both with respect to the instrumentality by which it was accomplished, and its remarkable effect. This plague consisted of violent inflammatory boils which broke out upon man and beast. Hitherto the judgments of God had been principally directed against the objects of idolatrous worship: this affected the most cultivated and powerful supporters of this idolatry. After the plague of frogs, the magicians had tried in vain to imitate the miracles of Moses. Yet they watched every step of his wonder-working career with great interest and anxiety. Now, however, they are made the subjects of divine visitation; they also feel the inflammatory, cancerous boils, and are unable longer to stand before Moses and Aaron. They are heard of no more; they either perished under this plague, or were afflicted so severely, that they dared no longer to obtrude themselves into the presence of the servants of God.

But the means by which this plague was effected were equally remarkable. In obedience to the explicit command of God in this case, Moses and Aaron "took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast." Exod. ix, 10. It may be safely assumed as an unquestionable fact, that means so specially appointed were not selected arbitrarily, or without substantial reason: they all had a significant meaning, and this in particular.

In Egypt Typho was regarded as the personification of the evil principle. In very ancient times human sacrifices were offered to propitiate this malign deity. The certainty of this, and the manner in which these sacrificial services were conducted, are given by several ancient authors. Diodorus and Athenæus state the fact. And Plutarch, on the authority of Manetho, says, "that formerly in the city of Idithya, they were wont to burn even men alive, giving them the name of Typhos, and, winnowing their ashes through a sieve, to scatter and disperse them in the air." *De Iside et Osiride*. If such a practice ever existed in Egypt, there cannot be a doubt that this was the time when it was likely to have been acted upon. Moses had now for a considerable period pursued his miraculous career: the magicians who at first attempted to equal his works were driven from the field; the throne and the priesthood, in their united power and influence, had been resisted and humbled; the entire population throughout the length and breadth of the land had been severely afflicted; and no human sagacity could divine where or when this terrific scourge would terminate. If, therefore, there was ever a time when the utmost effort was likely to be exerted to propitiate the evil principle, it was under the infliction of this plague; and if this was done according to the custom of the country, then the whole case is explained. Pharaoh and his priests would attend this horrid immolation, the destined victims would be offered in sacrifice to Typho, and the revolting rite of winnowing ashes in the air be completed. Then, while the king, and his courtiers, and the priests, lingered around the spot, hoping that success would crown this desperate and barbarous measure, Moses appears, and, taking of these very ashes, and sprinkling them in the air before the king, makes them the means of inflicting a plague more terrible than any that had preceded it. Does not this clearly exhibit God's controversy with the idolatry of Egypt? and, moreover, give a pointed signification and consistency to the account, which is otherwise unintelligible, if not absurd? (See *Appendix*, note 10.)

The seventh plague was a terrible storm of thunder, lightning, rain, and hail. This, apart from the direct proof which it afforded of the majesty and power of Jehovah, and of the certainty that Moses was commissioned by him, was a still further infliction on Egyptian idolatry. It

protracted God's judgments on the worship of animals, and at the same time commenced a similar attack on the vegetable kingdom. For it must be remembered, that the idolatry of this ancient people was so groveling as to make even trees and plants objects of idolatrous regard. The persea, peach, pomegranate, vine, acanthus, sycamore, fig, and tamarisk, among the trees, as well as garlic, onions, leeks, papyrus, and ivy, among plants and vegetables, were held holy and sacred, and sometimes even worshiped as divine. This plague, therefore, not only continued the infliction on Egyptian idolatry, but extended it into a new section of this impure system. This miracle was not only distinguished, like the preceding, by excepting the land of Goshen from its operation; it also showed the effect which the successive miracles had produced on the public mind of Egypt. Although Pharaoh was so *hardened* as to manifest no penitence or fear, many among his people had acquired a dread of the power of Jehovah. Prior to the infliction of this plague, Moses cautioned the king to bring his servants and his cattle home, lest, being found in the field, they should be destroyed. Although he might have contemned the advice, it had its effect; for "he that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses: and he that regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field." *Exod. ix, 20, 21.* Thus have we proof that these judgments did lead many of the wealthy Egyptians practically to renounce their confidence in vain idols, and to fear the word of the Lord.

The eighth plague consisted of immense swarms of locusts, which devoured all the vegetation that had escaped the hail. It has been supposed, by some writers, that it was the special province of the god Serapis to protect the country from these destructive creatures. If so, this miracle must have demonstrated his impotence. But, however this may be, the plague of locusts was a consummation of the preceding; and the Egyptian priesthood and people, who had before been devoted to their idolatrous system, must have seen with amazement and awe, if not with conviction, all that they esteemed sacred and divine on earth, crushed, broken, and destroyed, by a series of penal visitations, which Moses professed to inflict by the power of the God of the Hebrews.

But a yet more striking display of divine power was destined to attest the weakness and folly of the gorgeous system of Egyptian polytheism. The sun was worshiped throughout Egypt. The sacred emblems of his influence and supremacy were constantly in use; "the importance attached to this deity may be readily inferred from the fact of every Pharaoh having the title 'son of the sun' preceding his phonetic nomen."—*Wilkinson's Ancient Egypt*, vol. iv, p. 287. It was from this allusive relationship to the sun that the Scriptural term "Pharaoh," or *phrah*,

the usual appellation of the kings of Egypt, was derived. The moon was also worshiped under the name of Thoth. This object also held a very high rank, and was often dignified with the title "twice great."

These sublime objects of their idolatrous worship seemed to be too distant from our earth, too great and too glorious, to be affected by any power which Moses could wield. Nor is it unlikely that, amid the wreck of their terrestrial divinities, the Egyptians might still look to those luminaries, regard them as gods, and trust in them for help and deliverance.

But Jehovah had arisen out of his place, not only to deliver his people, but to vindicate his own insulted majesty: as a jealous God, he asserted his supremacy, and put to shame all the glory of Egyptian idolatry. In the accomplishment of this purpose, no object was so high, no creature so great, as to withstand his will. Moses was commanded to stretch out "his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days." Exod. x, 22. How paralyzed, how prostrate, must the Egyptian nation have felt at this time! So deep was the darkness, that during the whole of this time "they saw not one another." Verse 23. So overwhelming were the amazement and sorrow, that during this period no man "rose from his place." Uncertain whether they should ever again see the light, they lay prostrate in a darkness which was felt. Here the triumph of the God of Israel was complete, the perfect vanity of Egyptian idolatry demonstrated. Egypt, with all her learning and prowess, supported by a gorgeous and almost boundless range of idolatrous religion, is exhibited as convicted, punished, without any power to escape, any hope of alleviation.

Amid all this terrible infliction on the Egyptians, the Hebrews "had light in their dwellings."

The interpretation which has thus been given to the Scripture narrative of these remarkable events, is not only fully sustained by the most authentic accounts of ancient Egypt, but exactly accords with the declared purpose of God, which was not only the deliverance of Israel, but the religious correction and enlightenment of Egypt. This was distinctly announced: "And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them." Exod. vii, 5.

Egypt, rich in all other knowledge, celebrated throughout the world for her wisdom, was ignorant of God. Her sages had, in a manner the most marked and prominent, "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator." Rom. i, 25. This idolatry embraced the heavenly bodies, animals, the river, fishes, reptiles, trees, and plants; all this error, superstition, and iniquity were wrought up into a most elaborate and complicated system, and were sustained by a well-organized, powerful, and numerous priesthood. The

idolatry of Egypt was therefore a perfect exhibition of what the combined ingenuity and energy of man and Satan could devise, as a substitute for the worship of God ; and, being the national religion of Egypt, it was placed before the world in the most prominent form. While all this impetus was given to false views of God and of divine worship, the only people, perhaps, who retained a distinct knowledge and recognition of Jehovah were, in this same land, subjected to the most abject bondage, the most degrading slavery. In these peculiar circumstances the Lord undertook the cause of injured Israel. For the deliverance of his covenant people on the one hand, and the manifestation of his own power and glory on the other, he commissioned Moses and Aaron to effect this series of stupendous miracles.

These produced their intended effect. The Egyptian people had become weary of this terrible contest ; and Pharaoh himself, notwithstanding the hardness of his heart, relaxed his hold, and extended his terms, although still unwilling to accede to all the demands of Moses. These miracles contributed to promote the deliverance of the Hebrews in another way : The want of faith in God, on the part of the Israelites, was a greater obstacle to their deliverance than was the hardness of Pharaoh's heart, or the power of the Egyptian army. The several miraculous plagues, marked as they were by a strongly defined distinction between the persons and property of Egypt and of Israel, did much to convince the latter of the goodness, faithfulness, and power of Jehovah, and to induce them to trust fully in his covenant mercy.

The preparation, therefore, for the deliverance of the Hebrew people having been, by these means, completed, God proceeded to accomplish his purpose. This was effected by a miracle which, like all the preceding ones, was calculated to inflict punishment on Egypt, and to afford religious confidence and knowledge to Israel. On this memorable occasion the Lord commanded that every family throughout all the Hebrew tribes should slay a lamb ; (or, if that, in any case, could not be procured, a kid ;) this creature was to be a male of one year, without blemish. The animal was to be kept until the fourteenth of the month Nisan, when it was to be slain in the evening of that day, and the blood sprinkled on the door-posts and lintels of the door of the respective houses. The flesh of the lamb was then to be roasted, and eaten in the night, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. The manner of eating this meal was to be as remarkable and peculiar as the provision. All the people were to eat it, fully equipped for journeying, each having his shoes on his feet, his loins girt, and his staff in his hand ; and it was to be eaten in haste. All these commands had been given, all the necessary preparation made, and the expectation of all the Israelites raised to the utmost. They had also, according to the divine command, asked of the Egyptians gifts, gold,

jewels, and raiment; and so terror-stricken were the inhabitants of the land, that none refused, and the Israelites obtained an ample and peaceful booty, as a just recompense for their long and severe service. (See *Appendix*, note 11.) All this had been done. A mighty empire had been the subject of direct divine visitation until it had become ashamed of its vain gods, and, earnestly desiring the departure of the Hebrews, trembled in apprehension of further calamity. Thus both parties stood on the memorable fourteenth day of the month Nisan. That day passed away, and, as the darkness of night enshrouded the world, the door-posts of every Hebrew dwelling were sprinkled with blood, and every Hebrew family was standing around the roasted passover, eating in haste the appointed repast. At this hour the angel of the Lord passes through the land of Egypt, and smites with instant death the first-born of every family and of all beasts. On this, as on other occasions, the Israelites escaped. Now, the sprinkled blood was their defense. Contemplating the fearful extent and frightful nature of this calamity, the mind is prepared for the statement of the inspired writer: "And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." *Exod.* xii, 30. Two circumstances contributed to make this cry unparalleled: no country in the world was ever visited with such a terrible calamity; no people ever carried their lamentation for the dead to such an extent as the ancient Egyptians.

Smarting under this plague, the people felt as if all their lives were in eminent jeopardy, and they said, "We be all dead men." Verse 33. As no sovereign could resist the demand of a people so universally goaded to distraction by divine infliction, so the king now freely and fully allows the unconditional departure of the Israelites,—even urges their immediate journeying, and solicits a blessing on himself. The people of Egypt were also urgent for their departure, regarding themselves in imminent peril until they were gone. Thus "the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle." Verses 37, 38.

Such an emigration as this the world never saw, but on this occasion. On the lowest computation, the entire multitude must have been above two millions, and in all probability the number exceeded three millions. (See *Appendix*, note 12.) Is the magnitude of this movement usually apprehended? Do we think of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, as of the emigration of a number of families, twice as numerous as the entire population of the principality of Wales; or considerably more than the whole population of the British metropolis, (in 1841,)

with all their property, goods, utensils, and cattle? The collecting together of so immense a multitude, the arranging of the order of their march, the provision of the requisite food even for a few days, must, under the circumstances, have been utterly impossible, unless a very special and overruling Providence had graciously interfered to obviate the difficulties of the case. To the most superficial observer, it must be evident, that no man, or number of men, having nothing but human resources, could have ventured to undertake this journey. Scarcely any wonder wrought by divine power in Egypt appears greater than this emigration of a nation, when fairly and fully considered.

The Israelites journeyed from Rameses; (the same as Goshen, Gen. xlvii, 11;) but whether this term here refers to the district, or to the store-city of the same name, which the Hebrews built for Pharaoh in or near this province, cannot be clearly ascertained. From this place they formed a body as regular as circumstances would permit, and traveled to Succoth. One important fact respecting this journey is specially noticed by the inspired writer. The day on which the Israelites left Egypt exactly completed four hundred and thirty years from the time when Abraham entered Canaan, thus completing with the utmost exactitude the appointed period of time. (See *Appendix*, note 13.) From the manner in which this fact is mentioned, it appears sufficiently evident that the suffering descendants of Abraham had very special regard to the promise which Jehovah had given to their great progenitor. Probably, possessing detailed information which has not come down to us, they had long looked forward to this day; and, lo! it is, by the immediate interposition of God, made the precise period of their deliverance.

At Succoth the Israelites not only rested, but baked unleavened cakes of the dough which had been prepared before they left Goshen; and hence they pursued their march to Etham, which was situated on the edge of the wilderness. It appears, therefore, that hitherto the route taken was in an easterly direction, from the east bank of the Nile toward the Isthmus of Suez. In this journey, however, it must be specially noted, that they were not left to human sagacity or direction: "The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night." *Exod.* xiii, 21. This cloud afforded all the host of Israel a visible proof of the presence, guidance, and protection of their divine King. He was their Leader. It probably appeared to rest on the whole multitude of Israel, and thence stretched sufficiently in advance to direct their way, and at night covered their rear with the appearance of flaming fire. Hence the Psalmist says, "He spread a cloud for their covering," *Psalm* cv, 39; and the apostle, They "were bap-

tized in the cloud." 1 Cor. x, 2. In this manner, thus divinely overshadowed and defended, the multitude of Israel left Etham ; but here not only did the cloud indicate an alteration of the course, but, as if to explain and enforce this, "the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they *turn* and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon : before it shall ye encamp by the sea." Exod. xiv, 1, 2. In their march hitherto they appear to have taken the direct route to the wilderness, in perfect consistency with the original request which Moses preferred to Pharaoh : they were therefore now arrived at that neck of land which runs between the indentations of the Mediterranean Sea on the one hand, and the Red Sea on the other. In taking their way over this isthmus they appear to have kept as near the head of the Red Sea as possible. This course enabled them to march directly for Canaan, or, having passed the head of the Red Sea, to turn to the south, and take their way on the eastern bank of the Gulf, through the wilderness of Sinai. This appears to have been the expectation of Moses and of the people. But, instead of carrying out this apparent purpose, they are commanded to *turn* : they did so ; and thus, instead of rounding the head of the Red Sea near Suez, they reach its banks about thirty miles farther south, where they were placed in a position of great apparent danger, being quite hemmed in by the mountains, the desert, and the sea.

It is no objection to this account, but, on the contrary, its highest recommendation, to say that no human leader would have adopted this course. Certainly not. But it was taken for this very purpose,—that a yet more signal display of Jehovah's power might be made in the punishment of Egypt, and the deliverance of Israel.

Although the Hebrews had departed, the heart of Pharaoh went after them. The loss of two millions of slaves would be severely felt ; and this loss was greatly aggravated by recollections of the sufferings and humiliation of Egypt under the successive plagues. The Israelites were consequently watched, in the first stages of their journey, with malicious scrutiny and determined ill-will. When, therefore, it was reported to Pharaoh that by the direction of their course from Etham the Israelites were entangled in the wilderness, he immediately headed his army, and speedily placed all the power of Egypt in the rear of the Hebrew host. The Israelites now saw their danger, and in an agony of grief cried unto the Lord, and severely reproached Moses with having brought them "to die in the wilderness." The fault of the Israelites on this occasion was a want of faith in God. (See *Appendix*, note 14.) Their case was such as justly to excite all this apprehension, if the Lord had not been their leader and protector. But he carried out his purpose. The cloud covered the rear of the Hebrews, so that the Egyp-

tians could not come near them all the night, while Moses was commanded to stretch out his rod over the sea. Nothing can exceed the moral sublimity of this scene: the furious rage and cruel determination of the Egyptians; the helpless condition and deep distress of the whole Hebrew people; the calm dignity of Moses, who, acting as the instrument of Jehovah, wields the power of the Almighty. He soothes the excited multitude with words of peace, and promises of salvation. A strong east wind blows, the waters of the sea are divided, a pathway is made through the deep, and the host of Israel is led over the bed of the sea as on dry ground, the waters standing as a wall on the right hand and on the left. Intoxicated with envy, rage, and thirst for spoil, the army of Pharaoh pursues in the same manner; but when all the people of Israel had reached the other side, and they and all their substance were safe, then Moses again, by divine command, stretched forth his rod over the sea, and it returned to its natural state, overwhelming all the pride of Egypt, and destroying every man of the army in the mighty deep.

The immediate effect of this astonishing event was, the safety of the Israelites. If they had pursued any other course, as it would have been possible at any time for the king of Egypt to have pursued them, so a dread of his doing so might for years have haunted the minds of the Hebrew people, and terrified them in the course of their wandering career. This signal interposition destroyed this apprehension: with the death of the Egyptian army perished every probability of further injury from that nation.

Another consequence of this miraculous salvation would be, the possession of great spoil, especially in weapons and armor. The flower of Pharaoh's army, the chivalry of Egypt, as they lay on the shores of the Red Sea, would furnish the Israelites with a very valuable and easily acquired booty, and one, too, of which, in respect of their future destiny, they stood in great need.

A further result of this display of divine power, is to be traced in the future progress of the elect nation. It did much in this respect, by impressing the Israelites with a conviction of the goodness and power of their Lord Jehovah. If any event could have effectually rebuked their unbelief, and raised in every heart a strong and steady faith in God, surely this miraculous deliverance would have done it. Nor do all their future waywardness and murmuring prove that it had not a very salutary and powerful effect. It also did much to facilitate the future progress of the Hebrews, by magnifying the mighty power of Jehovah in the estimation of all surrounding nations. When our rationalistic divines discover a way in which this event might have happened under the operation of merely natural causes, and refer to some uncommon

recession of the tide, or other happy accident, as means by which, without a miracle, the escape of Israel and the ruin of Egypt might have taken place, they would do well to consider, if it were so, how, without a still greater miracle, all the surrounding nations at this time; and for generations afterwards, were so strongly impressed with the marvelous character of this event. So deep and wide-spread was the conviction that this was a miracle of the highest order, a glorious display of infinite power, a clearer revelation of the might of God than the world had ever before seen, that, forty years afterward, kings trembled on their thrones at the recollection of the circumstance; and, what is yet more remarkable, a poor private woman in a small town on the banks of the Jordan could say, forty years after the exodus, "I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." Joshua ii, 9-11. The entire history of the world refutes the assumption, that a fortunate accident could have produced such an extensive and enduring impression of wonder and of awe as this. Nor could anything have contributed more effectually to promote the future success of the Hebrew cause, than their deep and settled conviction that they were the elect people of Almighty God, and specially aided by his infinite power.

All these results were contemplated at the time, of which the following magnificent verses afford ample proof:—

"I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously:
 The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.
 The LORD is my strength and song,
 And is become my salvation:
 He is my God, and him will I extol;
 My father's God, and him will I exalt
 Mighty in battle is the LORD; the LORD is his name.
 Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea:
 His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.
 The depths have covered them:
 They sank down to the bottom as a stone.
 Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power:
 Thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.
 And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown those who rose up
 against thee:
 Thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.
 And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together:
 The floods stood upright as a heap,
 And the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.
 The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake,

I will divide the spoil; my desire shall be satisfied upon them;
 I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.
 Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them:
 They sank as lead in the mighty waters.
 Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the mighty ones?
 Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,
 To be praised with reverence, doing wonders?
 Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.
 Thou, in thy mercy, hast led forth the people whom thou hast redeemed!
 Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.
 The people shall hear, and be afraid;
 Sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina,
 Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed;
 The mighty men of Moab, trembling, shall take hold upon them;
 All the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.
 Fear and dread shall fall upon them;
 By the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone;
 Till thy people pass over, O LORD,
 Till the people pass over, whom thou hast purchased.
 Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance,
 In the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in;
 In the sanctuary, O LORD, which thy hands have established.
 The LORD shall reign forever and ever."

Thus sang Moses and the emancipated Hebrews, when they breathed the sweet air of heaven as freemen, on the banks of the Red Sea, and saw their proud and cruel oppressors lying dead on the shore; while Miriam and her female associates joined in the chorus:—

"Sing ye to the LORD; for he hath triumphed gloriously:
 The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

The glorious issue of this contest is worthy of very serious attention, not only as a fulfillment of divine promise, but also as a wonderful accomplishment of Scripture prophecy. When Abraham was an old and childless man, the Lord had said unto him, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance." Gen. xv, 13, 14. How strange and contradictory to the usual course of events does all this appear! Yet how strictly and literally was all fulfilled! Abraham and his sons were strangers in a land that was not theirs: this fact is indubitably attested by the purchase of a single field in which to bury their dead. For generations such was their condition. But, beyond this, the seed of Abraham were to serve a strange nation. It has been seen how fully this was fulfilled. They did, indeed, serve with rigor, and were made to drink deep of the cup of affliction. But God had said, "That nation I will judge;" and what judgments of God surpassed those wrought in the field of Zoan and at the Red Sea? What a glorious commentary

on this prophecy is the history of the exodus! Jehovah did indeed pour his judgments upon Egypt, and Israel left that land with "great substance." What a strange anomaly is this whole case! An afflicted and enslaved people leaving the land of their oppression, in defiance of their oppressors, yet without war or violence, and enriching themselves, and spoiling their tyrant masters by the act! All this the prediction seemed to require, and all this the history amply details. As if to set forth this remarkable fact with the greatest prominence, full information is given respecting the wealth of the Israelites immediately after the exodus; and this, after two centuries of vassalage, accompanied by an unexampled increase of population, both of which might be expected to diminish individual property.

The object of this introductory chapter has been thus completed. It has been shown, that Jehovah called Abraham and his seed into special covenant with himself; that to this patriarch he gave explicit promises that his descendants should be a great and favored nation. The development of this purpose has passed under our review; and, on closing the investigation, the most signal impression arising from the whole is a deep sense of the magnitude of the interpositions of God in the affairs of man. The checkered career of Abraham,—the quiet life of Isaac,—the various and complicated circumstances in the history of Jacob,—the still more varied and painful vicissitudes of his descendants, important and interesting in themselves,—are rendered a thousand-fold more so, by their uniform relation to the great purpose of God, and their certain (although sometimes imperceptible) co-operation in the evolution of his grand design. Nor are these purposes always effected by the ordinary operation of his providence: they give a glorious exhibition of Jehovah. The perfect goodness, eternal truth, infinite love, boundless compassion, unsearchable wisdom, and almighty power of God are not portrayed, but seen in action; not described, but heard speaking in the ordinary actions of men, and directing the ways of private life and family circumstance, or assuming more than angel power,—controlling elements, working prodigies, and displaying the full power of the divine arm.

By these wondrous means, the Hebrew people rose up into being. The manifestations of infinite prescience and infinite power fostered the embryo creation of the Hebrew commonwealth. From the vocation of Abraham, to the morning when the emancipated Israelites stood on the banks of the Red Sea a free people, the purposes of God were in continual operation, to raise up the seed of Abraham, in numbers and knowledge, faith and freedom, worthy of the high position to which they had been predestinated. They stand before us, therefore, as a people prepared of the Lord, and a people whose history and religion were destined to exercise a commanding influence on the whole world of mankind.

THE
HISTORY AND RELIGION
OF
THE HEBREW PEOPLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORY OF THE HEBREWS IN THE WILDERNESS.

PECULIARITIES of Hebrew Nationality at the Exodus—State of the People—Their rational Expression of Joy—Their Journeying—Marah—Elim—Wilderness of Sin—The Quails and Manna—Miraculous Supply of Water—Amalekites—The Hebrews arrive at Sinai—Glorious Revelation of God—He delivers his Law to the People—Moses called up into the Mount—The golden Calf—The People punished and pardoned—Moses again called into the Mount—The Levitical ecclesiastical Economy promulged—The Tabernacle and its Furniture prepared—Its sacred Service began and divinely accepted—Sin and Punishment of Nadab and Abihu—The People numbered and organized—Their Order of March—The People murmur for Flesh—Quails sent—And seventy Prophets appointed—Rebellion and Punishment of Miriam—The Israelites arrive at Kadesh-Barnea—The Purpose of God in their Wandering—Spies sent out—The Object and Results of their Mission—The existing Generation doomed to perish in the Wilderness—They wander thirty-eight Years—The Return of the Israelites to Kadesh—The Rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—Their miraculous Punishment—The Sin and Doom of Moses and Aaron—The Edomites refuse Israel a Passage through their Country—Death of Aaron—Plague of fiery Serpents—Conquest of two Kings of the Amorites—Balaam—Sin and Punishment of Baal-peor—Second Census—Joshua appointed the Leader—Conquest of the Midianites—The Death of Moses—Order of Encampment. Notes. Song of Moses—The Healing of the Waters—Laws given at Marah—Quails—The Manna a Miracle—The smitten Rock—Amalek—Jethro's Visit to Moses—The Meekness of Moses—Situation of Kadesh—Absurdity of rationalistic Interpretation—Miriam—The Sin of Moses—The brazen Serpent—The Plains of Moab—Numbering of the People.

RESCUED from the house of bondage, and delivered from their Egyptian enemies, the Hebrews appear before us, not only as a separate and distinct people, but as an independent nation. With a population of two or three millions, and a body of six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms; possessing considerable wealth in flocks and herds, and also in jewels and gold; they must be regarded as invested with all the attributes of a political community, independent of every earthly power, and prepared to assert and maintain their nationality.

In these circumstances the Israelites are distinguished by two grand peculiarities. Although they possessed numbers, power, and

wealth, superior to many of the independent nations of that day, they had no country. Standing on the barren soil of the deserts of Sinai, from whose rocks and sands no sustenance could possibly be elicited, they had yet to obtain a territorial location. A country had, indeed, been promised them by God, and had, for ages previously, been regarded by their forefathers as the divinely appointed inheritance of their posterity; and this people had now left Egypt under the high hope of obtaining it; but all this was to be achieved. In another respect they were unlike every other people,—they had no earthly head, no recognized governor. Moses acted as their chief magistrate; but he did not assume this office as having any natural title or claim to it, or as being appointed thereto by the suffrages of the people; but as one who exercised authority in the name, and by the special appointment, of Jehovah. Nor did Moses act as one to whom God had delegated the government of this people, but rather as the servant and representative of God, who retained this government in his own hand. The Hebrew commonwealth was, therefore, from the beginning a theocracy. As they passed from the tyrannical yoke of the Egyptians, they were at once regarded as the specially elected people of Jehovah. He led them; he was their protection; he gave them not only their religious economy, but also their civil and political laws.

Yet, although the Hebrew people at this time had no human governor, nor any national constitution, and had just emerged from a slavish vassalage, it must not be supposed that they marched as an unconnected, disorderly crowd, or manifested their joy at this great deliverance in unmeaning ebullitions of ecstasy, licentious mirth, or wild and lawless action. They appear to have possessed a simple and perfect bond of union in their family arrangements and connection. The people were divided into tribes, the tribes into families, and these were further subdivided; so that, according to regular family descent, the multitudes of the Hebrew people were arranged in an orderly and systematic manner. This mode of arrangement not only produced order, but created, what was essential to its maintenance, gradations of rank. The hereditary heads of the tribes, according to the well-known usage of patriarchal life, exercised authority as princes; the chiefs of the several families were next in subordinate rank; and so on, for the further subdivisions. Thus throughout this immense host a universally ramified paternal authority was everywhere exercised, producing a unity and order which to a great extent supplied the place both of formal civil polity, and regular military organization. This mode of family arrangement existed among the Hebrews whilst in Egypt, and those he-

editary chiefs were the "elders" whom God commissioned Moses to address. *Exod. iii, 16.*

The manner in which this people rejoiced at their deliverance, while it illustrates the orderly state of the multitude, also exhibits their intellectual and moral cultivation. They had escaped from evils as weighty in aggravated affliction, as humiliating and debasing in their effects, as had ever pressed upon any people. This state of abject woe had continued so long, that most of the people delivered at the exodus must have been born into it, as their inheritance. Yet how did these men manifest their joy, after having suddenly obtained a great accession of wealth, seen their tyrant foes destroyed, and felt themselves restored to perfect freedom? Much as is implied in the statement, it may be safely answered, that they did so in a manner worthy of the great occasion. Moses composed a thanksgiving-ode, which the thousands of Israel, both men and women, united in singing, as they exulted in their new-born freedom on the shores of the Red Sea. In this noble piece of poetry, full of sublime thought, breathing deeply pious and grateful feeling, and replete with enlarged views of the consequences which would result from this glorious deliverance, we have an expression of the mind of the Hebrew public on this great occasion. (*See Appendix, note 15.*) As the ode was adapted for alternate recitation, not only did the men of Israel shout forth their joy in its sacred strains, but the women also, led on by Miriam, and accompanying their voices with instrumental music, swelled the chorus of thanksgiving, and re-echoed to the skies,

"Sing to Jehovah; for he is very greatly exalted :
The horse and his rider he hath cast into the sea."

Where in all history do we find a great national deliverance so appropriately acknowledged? Let this public action be tested by the highest standard, in regard to elevated religious devotion, sterling intellectual dignity, elegant and cultivated taste; and then let those who speak of these Hebrews as a horde of semi-savages tell us what great public act in the best ages of Greece or Rome will bear a comparison with this grateful conduct of the redeemed Israelites. At first sight, all the dignity and intellectual grandeur of this proceeding may be attributed to the superior learning and mental cultivation of Moses, who, having been bred up in the Egyptian court, may not be regarded as a fair sample of Hebrew cultivation. Yet it must be remembered, that this poetry was not written for the purpose of parading the mental cultivation of the Israelites before the world, but on a great and solemn emergency, to guide the grateful effusion of their individual mind in suitable channels of expression

to Heaven. It was, therefore, not only necessary that the terms of this splendid epic should be worthy of the grand occasion which gave it birth, but equally so, that they should be exactly adapted to the state of thought, feeling, and intellectual calibre of the people for whose use it was written. And if this were so, it will follow that the Hebrews of that day ought to be regarded, not only as a civilized, but also to a considerable extent as an enlightened and cultivated, people.

Having thus returned thanksgiving to God for their deliverance, and collected the spoil of their enemies, the Israelites pursued their way through the wilderness. From the shores of the Red Sea they journeyed three successive days. During this march the people suffered greatly for want of water; and their sufferings were aggravated when they arrived at Marah, and found the waters so bitter that they could not drink it. This led them to murmur against Moses, and to demand of him a supply of this necessary element; saying, "What shall we drink?" *Exod. xv, 24.* The impropriety and wickedness of this conduct is more evident than the amount of suffering which occasioned it; and both should be fairly considered. It may not, indeed, be impossible for us to form a just idea of the magnitude of this affliction. But when it is considered that this immense host, consisting of men, women, and children, with numerous herds of cattle, had to travel mostly on foot over a sandy desert, under a burning sun; it will be seen that not only their property, but their lives, depended upon a plentiful supply of water. After three days' privation, and consequent extreme suffering, when they reached a station where this natural beverage was found in abundance, and promised an instant alleviation of all their pain,—to find this so intolerably bitter that it was utterly useless, was enough to try the temper and excite the feeling of any people. It is not just to regard the Israelites in this case in comparison with those troops of military men who, in their warlike pursuits, have endured the greatest suffering with fortitude and resignation. The Israelites were not prepared for this endurance by discipline: and, more than this, they had not to bear it alone; their aged and helpless parents, their weary wives and famishing children, were alike partakers of the pain. The intensity of the suffering can, therefore, be scarcely exaggerated. But their error and their sin lay in this,—that, as they had so recently received such miraculous displays of the power of God in their deliverance and protection, and as they all knew that they had been guided in all their way, and led to their present position under the sacred cloud, they should have asked God in humility and faith for a supply of their urgent and absolute wants. Their

unbelieving forgetfulness of God, and their rebellious murmuring against Moses, were unworthy of men who had seen such gracious and divine marvelous interpositions in their behalf; and in their circumstances they became open and aggravated sins.

Moses did what they should have done. He "cried unto the Lord," and was heard; for the Lord directed him to a tree, which being cast into the waters, they were made sweet. (See *Appendix*, note 16.) Thus were their wants supplied, and they had another proof that their help was in God. Here also the Lord made special revelations for their future guidance, and enjoined strict and constant obedience as essential to their safety. (See *Appendix*, note 17.)

From Marah the directing cloud led them to Elim. Here seventy palm-trees, and twelve wells of water, afforded them great comfort and refreshment. After leaving Elim, the next encampment of importance was in the wilderness of Sin. They arrived at this station just one month after they had left Egypt. And it appears that by this time their stock of provisions was exhausted; for at this station the people suffered great privation, and not only complained of their lot, but united in one general expression of dissatisfaction and distrust. We are told that "the whole congregation" joined in it, and said to Moses and Aaron, "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full! for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger." *Exod.* xvi, 3. Here we have another lamentable manifestation of their want of faith in God. The intensity of their necessity and consequent suffering was certainly very great. And probably their present wants were rendered doubly distressing on account of their future prospects. The cloud was directing them toward a vast expanse of barren wilderness; by what means, then, were provisions to be obtained for millions of people? The thing seemed to be utterly impracticable; to all human appearance, impossible. The people saw this; and hence the strong expressions of discontent, and the gloomy language of despair, which pervade their complaint.

The Israelites have been severely, and in some respects unjustly, censured for their conduct on this occasion. In Egypt, it is highly probable that they had abundance of provision. Now they are destitute: their complaint is not a groundless or exaggerated one; so completely were their means of sustenance exhausted, that a miracle had immediately to be wrought, to afford them a supply. In such a host great inconvenience, if not absolute want, would have been felt before they were brought to this state of entire destitution. In those circumstances it does not appear to indicate any degraded or

debased state of mind, that they should have preferred to die in Egypt, where their wives and their children had a sufficiency of bread. The case was one of a deeply trying and painful nature: it ought to have elicited confidence in God: this was its object and end; but their carnal minds and unbelieving hearts sank under the affliction, and they rebelled against the merciful purposes of God. It has indeed been alleged, that they could not have been in a state of absolute want, "as they had brought abundance of flocks and herds with them out of Egypt." But this objection is of no weight, unless it can be shown that these flocks were not the private property of the several chiefs; for if they were, then the great mass of the people might still be destitute. Besides, it must be evident that, if all the cattle had been slain and given up to the public, they alone would not have furnished wholesome provisions, nor have long averted the evil.

On this, as on the former occasion, the Lord provided for the wants of his people. But the interposition here is on a grander scale, and of a more permanent character. Moses was promptly informed of the means which would be used. The Lord said unto him, "I will rain bread from heaven for you." As the leader of the Hebrews saw in the murmurings of the people a practical disbelief that God had brought them out of Egypt, and had made himself their King and their Protector, he introduced this great display of divine power and benevolence on their behalf, in a manner most calculated to impress their minds with its supernatural and gracious character, and thus, if possible, to remove their remaining infidelity. Moses directed Aaron to inform the people that God had heard their murmurings, and to require them to "come near before the Lord. And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God." *Exod. xvi, 9-12.* These promises were fulfilled. In the evening a multitude of quails alighted around the camp, and afforded them a plentiful supply of flesh. (See *Appendix*, note 18.) This was evidently intended as a temporary provision for their immediate wants, as the quails were only found on this particular occasion. On the next morning the ground was covered with manna, which was intended as a substitute for bread, and as such to be continued, and afford them the means of subsistence during the whole of their sojourn in the wilderness. As might

have been expected, a fact so full of interest as this permanent miraculous supply of food, has induced a most careful scrutiny into every particular contained in the inspired narrative of the event.

This remarkable substance fell with the dew every morning; and when the moisture was exhaled by the heat of the sun, the manna appeared alone, covering the ground around the encampment; it was white, like hoar-frost, or the "color of bdellium," (Num. xi, 7,) in form round, and about the size of coriander-seed. What the nature of this substance was, we are not informed; but when the Israelites saw it, and inquired what it was, they were told by Moses, "This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." Exod. xvi, 15. And they were commanded to gather a sufficient quantity for every family at the rate of an omer for each individual. Any quantity of this provision which was kept till the following day, became putrid and useless. So the manna appeared every morning, and thus the thousands of Israel were supplied with food. The miraculous nature of this provision was clearly attested by the extraordinary fact, that while at other times any manna kept until the next day became useless, they were commanded on the sixth day to gather a provision for two days, as none fell on the Sabbath; and this remained over the whole two days perfectly good. Respecting the taste of this food, we are told that when first gathered it had the flavor of honey, or cakes made of flour and honey; but that after it became hard, and was ground or pulverized, the taste of it became like that of fresh oil. A pot full of manna was commanded to be laid up before the Lord, to remain a memorial, throughout all ages, of this wonderful interposition. (See *Appendix*, note 19,)

It is important to recognize the effect which this daily repeated miracle was calculated to produce on the public mind of the Hebrew people. In itself, it must have been regarded by the most thoughtless as a direct proof of divine goodness and power; whilst those who were disposed to view it in connection with the gracious promises which had been made to their fathers, and the marvelous works which they had previously seen, could scarcely fail to draw from the whole a deep conviction of the faithfulness and compassion of God, and the consequent certainty of their final deliverance and exaltation. On the whole, the supply of manna was adapted to suggest much serious reflection, and strong confidence in God.

From the wilderness of Sin, the Hebrews journeyed to Rephidim, where the people were again distressed for want of water, and again vented their anger in severe reproaches against Moses. Their conduct is here more surprising and culpable than on any previous occasion. They had seen the gracious interposition of God in a

similar exigency; they were even now receiving their daily bread in a miraculous manner from heaven; and yet, so unreasonable was their spirit, that they said unto Moses, "Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" while their violence of manner was so great, that Moses "cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me." *Exod. xvii, 3, 4.* How much more rational, not to say religious, would humble supplication to God for a supply of their wants have been! Yet he deigned to save them. "The Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." *Verses 5, 6.* It is worthy of remark here, that the miracle was not wrought at Rephidim, which does not appear from the account to have been very near; for, if it had, in their parched condition, the Israelites would have gladly accompanied their leader on this mission. The account refers to the selection of the elders, and their going to Horeb, as if it had been some considerable distance. All this appears to be well-established fact. Dr. Wilson and Dr. Robinson agree as to Rephidim being about a day's journey from Sinai, and so situated that a stream of water flowing from Horeb would run directly to the Hebrew encampment. How impressive must the whole scene have been! the shekinah of God leading the way, Moses and the elders following; the time occupied in the journey, and the consequent excitement and anxiety of the people; the smitten rock, and the torrents of water flowing over the intermediate space, and rushing at God's command to meet the wants and refresh the spirits of his famished people! (*See Appendix, note 20.*) What sight could affect the mind and impress the heart, if this would not? There was another reason for making the rock at Horeb the scene of this miracle. The Israelites were to encamp near it at their next removal, and to remain in the neighborhood for a long time. If, therefore, the water had been elicited from a rock at Rephidim, another miracle would have been required to procure a supply for the camp at Sinai; but as the scene of this wonder was placed at the head of the valley at Horeb, it provided a supply for the people during their whole sojourn in its vicinity.

While encamped at Rephidim, the Israelites had, for the first time, to defend themselves against a warlike aggression made on them by the Amalekites. (*See Appendix, note 21.*) According to the state-

ment given in Deuteronomy xxv, 17, 18, this attack was characterized by consummate craftiness and cruelty. "Remember," says Moses, "what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt; how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God." The exact time when this incursion took place cannot now be ascertained. From the passage just quoted, it appears probable that it occurred on the arrival of the Israelites at Rephidim, while the main body was engaged in encamping, and when all were weary and distressed for want of water. Then, falling on the rear of the Hebrews, they smote those who, being feeble, remained behind. Exposed to this danger, Moses selected Joshua, a young man, whose piety, wisdom, and courage had already distinguished him, and commanded him to select a body of men, and go out, and fight with Amalek. It appears that in the first aggression these invaders had inflicted serious injury on the Hebrews, and retired: Moses therefore makes this arrangement to punish the cruel and unprovoked assault, and to prevent a repetition of it. In accordance with the general design of God in the government of his people, it was necessary that the Amalekites should be defeated, while it was equally necessary that the victory should not be regarded as the result of Hebrew prowess. The safety of the Israelites required the first condition; and the entire dependence upon God, which the Israelites were in all respects taught to feel, rendered the second essential. To meet this case, therefore, Moses, with Aaron and Hur, went up to the top of the hill, while Joshua and his company went out to fight with Amalek. And there, in the sight of all the people, the man of God held up his rod toward heaven, and with outstretched hands implored help from the God of Israel. While he remained in this attitude, Joshua prevailed; but his strength failing, and his hands dropping down, Amalek rallied, and obtained the advantage. Seeing this, Aaron and Hur placed Moses in a position where they could hold up his hands, which they did until the going down of the sun. So "Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." Exod. xvii, 13.

After this victory, the Lord pronounced the doom of this people, and said unto Moses, "Write this for a memorial in a book,* and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven," (verse 14:) a denunciation which was afterward repeated by Balaam.

Immediately after the recital of this war, the Mosaic narrative

* Yet commentators persist in saying, that the inscription of the law upon the two tables by God was the first writing. See Patriarchal Age. Preliminary Dissertation.

informs us, that Jethro, the priest or prince of Midian, having "heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, and that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt," came into the wilderness to Moses; bringing with him Zipporah his daughter, the wife of Moses, and her two sons; who, although they had accompanied Moses toward Egypt, when he was called of the Lord to go there, had all returned to the house of Jethro. *Exod. xviii.* (See *Appendix*, note 22.)

From Rephidim, the directing cloud led the Israelites to Sinai. They arrived there, and encamped before the mountain on the first day of the third month, or forty-five days from the time of their departure from Egypt. This place was destined to be the scene of the most glorious displays of the Divine Majesty which the world had ever witnessed. If the Egyptian passover may be regarded as the birth-day of the Hebrew nation, when God claimed Israel for his own son, this may, with equal propriety, be observed as the time when the rising youth was called into special intercourse with his Father, and put under a course of instruction and discipline to prepare him for his high destiny. Here Jehovah called his elect people into covenant relation to himself, and gave them some new religious laws, which were incorporated into, and made the basis of, a complete scheme of civil, political, and ecclesiastical polity. As the next chapter will investigate the religion of this period, it will only be necessary at present to notice the particulars which are connected with the history of the Israelites during these transactions.

The Lord having called Moses, he went up into the mountain, and was there commanded to speak thus unto the children of Israel: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." So Moses came down and "called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord." *Exod. xix. 4-8.*

The people, having thus accepted the terms of the covenant, and pledged themselves to be obedient to the divine government, were commanded on the third day to purify themselves, and wash their clothes, preparatory to their witnessing the glorious appearance of Jehovah on Sinai. On the third day after this command had been given, the fifth day of the month, and the fiftieth from their leaving

Egypt, Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God. The annals of the world can scarcely present us with a scene more awfully sublime than this. Bounds had been set around the Mount, lest the people, daring to approach too near to the Divine Presence, should perish. Jehovah descended upon Sinai, and the mountain trembled to its base, thick darkness and flaming fire gathered around it, and the trumpet of God sounded, the earth quaked, and the whole congregation stood terror-stricken before the Lord; while Jehovah in a loud voice, speaking out of the midst of the fire, gave unto the people that germ of all his legislation, the Decalogue. So magnificent in grandeur, and at the same time so terrible, were the sight and the sound, that even Moses exceedingly feared and trembled; and the people entreated that God himself might speak to them no more, but that his will might be made known through his servant: a prayer which the Lord was pleased to hear and grant. It is not possible for us fully to realize the solemn majesty of this scene; the great and glorious Jehovah announcing his will to his own selected people, without any intervening medium, surrounded by such fearful evidences of his greatness and power, that the loftiest intellect and the most exalted piety trembled in his presence, and entreated that some means of access to the Deity, more suitable to the frailty of humanity, might in future be vouchsafed.

After this transaction the Lord delivered unto Moses an important portion of judicial law, principally relating to civil duties. Exodus xxi-xxiii. On the nature and tendency of these requirements it is not necessary to remark, further than that the revelation of this polity fully confirms what has been said respecting the theocratic form of the Hebrew government. As God was their King, he prescribed their laws; not merely such as related to religion, but those also which respected their civil and political economy. This being done, the Lord called Moses to come up unto him in the Mount, and commanded Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, to worship at a distance. On this occasion Moses returned and "told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." Exod. xxiv, 3. And Moses *wrote* all the words of the Lord, that they might be preserved in all their integrity.

Afterward Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the seventy elders, were again called up into the Mount; and unto them was granted an illustrious vision of the majesty and glory of God. It is extremely difficult to give any exact and consistent interpretation of all the terms used in this description, Exod. xxiv. 9-11; yet one

thing is certain,—there was no visible representation of Deity; they “saw no manner of similitude.” Deut. iv, 15. This glorious revelation having terminated, Moses was called to go farther up into the Mount, to the presence of the Divine Glory. He therefore commanded Aaron and the elders to return, and take the oversight of the people; and, with Joshua, he ascended farther up into the mountain. In the brevity of this part of the narrative some obscurity exists; but the most probable interpretation appears to be, that Moses took Joshua with him until he reached that part of the Mount which was covered with the cloud, and that they tarried there six days together; after which, Jehovah called Moses to come up unto the seat of his glory; Moses, leaving Joshua at this place, obeyed the call, and went up alone unto the Divine Presence, where he remained forty days. During this time, the Lord communicated to Moses the substance of that ecclesiastical economy which was intended to be the distinguishing feature of the Jewish nation.

While Moses was thus engaged, the Israelites, (who from below saw the Mount enveloped in flame,) six weeks having elapsed since he had left them, began to despair of his return. They therefore assembled themselves together, and came to Aaron, and urged him to make them “a god”* to go before them. He, so far as the narrative informs us, complied without remonstrance or hesitation; and having obtained their ornaments of gold, of this metal he made a molten calf, and built an altar, and proclaimed the following day as a feast unto Jehovah. On this occasion the people arose early, offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings; and having “sat down to eat and drink,” they “rose up to play.” Exod. xxxii, 6.

There is perhaps no historical incident in the whole annals of the Hebrew nation which presents greater difficulties than this. As, however, the investigation of this subject belongs to the next chapter, it will be sufficient here to call attention to the astonishing fact, that while the awful voice of God, which had enjoined them not to make to themselves any graven image, and at the sound of which every heart had quailed, was still tingling in their ears, this flagrant act of transgression was perpetrated.

The melancholy intelligence of this great declension was communicated by God to Moses; and he was sent down to them with the two tables of stone containing the law, the workmanship of God, in his hand. Having come down to the side of the Mount, where Joshua waited for him, he descended with him toward the congregation. As they went, they heard the sound of a tumult: this Joshua supposed to be the sound of war; but Moses, divinely informed of what had

* So Geddes, Booth, and Rosenmüller render it.

taken place, corrected his error. Yet, although he had been so forewarned, and notwithstanding the great meekness of his temper, no sooner did Moses come near enough to see the golden calf, and the people dancing and singing before it, than, angry at this flagrant violation of divine law, he cast the tables from his hands, and brake them in pieces beneath the Mount. He then took the golden calf and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and mixed it with water, and made the children of Israel drink of it. After the destruction of the idol, he summoned those who were on the Lord's side to attend him. All the Levites having obeyed the call, he sent them throughout the camp to slay those who had been most guilty in this transaction; and about three thousand men were then destroyed.

Throughout the whole of this case, Moses acted in a manner the most noble that can be conceived. When Jehovah threatened to destroy the Israelites for their sin, and to make of him a great nation, the pious and patriotic man showed that his devotedness to God, and his love for his people, influenced him far above all personal or family considerations. He preferred the Divine honor and glory to any personal aggrandizement; and was so deeply concerned for his offending brethren, that he never ceased to intercede on their behalf, until Jehovah graciously promised to continue unto them his presence as heretofore.

The Lord having pardoned the sin of his people, Moses was again called up into the Mount with two new tables, on which he wrote the ten commandments from the dictation of God. On this occasion he received various other laws, and was favored with a further and more glorious manifestation of Jehovah; which had such an effect upon his countenance, that when he came down his face shone so brightly that Aaron and the elders feared to come near him, and he put on a veil while he conversed with them. On this second occasion also, Moses was in the Mount with God forty days.

Immediately after his descent from Sinai the second time, Moses proceeded to carry into effect the divine commands respecting the ecclesiastical apparatus and polity, concerning all which he had been fully informed in the Mount. Although all the erections included in this scheme were temporary, and adapted to be taken down and carried from place to place, and then again to be raised as the camp was removed from one place to another; yet, when the numerous utensils and requisites are considered,—the preparation of the tabernacle and its court, the ark, and other provision for the most holy place, the laver, altar, and other necessities for sacrifice, ablution, and the various requirements of the ceremonial law; the vestments, and other ornaments for the priests,—it will be acknowledged that

the work was one of great extent and magnitude, especially when we remember that the people had just emerged from the most debasing slavery, and were locating temporarily in a desert.

With respect to the necessary provision for the work, the sanctuary of God and its furniture were not to be made of common or mean materials. These emblems and figures of "things in the heavens" were to be composed of gold and silver: brass in abundance was required, as well as various precious stones, valuable wood, costly yarns, skins, and numerous other articles. Yet the people possessed all that was necessary, and, when appealed to by Moses, gave willingly until everything required for this great work was placed at the disposal of their chief.

It may be desirable to form some idea of the value of these contributions. The particulars are generally stated, *Exod.* xxv, 3-7; and afterward more fully detailed, chap. xxxv; and the amount is also given as a whole, chap. xxxviii, 21, &c. From these different accounts it appears, that half a shekel of silver was levied on every man above twenty years of age; besides which, every one who was so inclined made voluntary offerings. Moses assembled the congregation, (xxxv, 4,) and mentioned what classes of articles would be needed for the work of the tabernacle; and those persons who possessed any of the articles needed, offered liberally, so that more than enough was soon obtained, and Moses forbade anything further to be brought. xxxvi, 5-7. The articles required varying considerably in character and value, there was room for almost every person to testify his zeal by some offering or other. The wealthy could bring precious stones and gold, while the poorer class might furnish the skins, and the hair of goats. The women, it appears, (xxxv, 26,) exerted themselves in spinning the goats' hair for the tent coverings, as women do to this day in the encampments of the Bedouin Arabs.

"The statement in chap. xxxviii, 24-31, is very valuable, as enabling us to form some idea of the expense of this costly fabric. It is there said that the gold weighed 29 talents and 730 shekels; the silver, raised by a poll-tax of half a shekel, was 100 talents and 1,775 shekels; and the brass, (more probably copper,) 70 talents and 2,400 shekels. This enables us to form the following calculation, estimating the talent of 3,000 shekels at 152lbs. troy weight:—

Gold, at £4 per ounce.....	£175,460	0	0
Silver, at 5s. per ounce.....	37,721	17	6
Brass, (or copper,) at 1s. 3d. per lb. avoirdupois.....	138	6	0
Total.....	£213,320	3	6

"Now we have to consider that this is the value of only the raw material of the metals employed in the structure of the tabernacle;

and when we add the value of the wood, the curtains, the dress of the high priest, with its breast-plate of precious stones, the dresses of the common priests, and the workmanship of the whole, it must be considered a moderate estimate, if we regard the total expense of this fabric as not less than £250,000."—*Kitto's Illustrated Commentary*.

In Western Asia at present the precious metals have a much higher actual value than in Europe. This might not have been the case in ancient times, when we are told that gold and silver abounded in Arabia and Egypt. Yet, however this may be, the contribution of so much valuable metal, in addition to other costly benefactions, proves that the people possessed very considerable substance.

But the construction of the tabernacle, and of its various and costly furniture, not only shows the wealth of the Israelites; it also proves that they possessed a thorough knowledge of the useful and elegant arts. Making every allowance for the special inspiration of Bezaleel and Aholiab, who were thus qualified for devising curious works, and for working in gold, silver, and brass, and for cutting and setting precious stones and carving in wood; it must be evident to the most superficial reader, that the ordinary operations of working in wood and metals, of spinning, weaving, and dyeing, must have been familiar to the people at large. All the handicraft arts must have been practiced; and the community who in the wilderness could execute such works, must have been qualified to take a respectable position amongst the civilized nations of the earth.

The commandments of Jehovah respecting the tabernacle and its furniture, and the appointment and consecration of the priests, having been obeyed, and the sacred things having been consecrated by blood, "Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces." Lev. ix, 23, 24. Thus was obedience to the revealed will of God acknowledged and honored.

But, immediately after this, Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, proceeding to offer incense before the Lord in a manner unauthorized by the statutes delivered to Moses, were struck dead by fire from Jehovah. Thus early did God guard his divinely revealed economy from any human alteration or vain intrusion.

The stay of the Israelites at Sinai terminated the first year of their sojourn in the wilderness; and on the first month of the second year, the passover was reappointed and observed. On the first day

of the second month, Moses was commanded to take the number of the people. This led to a careful investigation into the pedigrees of the several families, and formed a solid basis for the construction of future genealogical tables.

The result of this census showed, that, after one year's journeying in the wilderness, the Israelites numbered 603,550 men above twenty years of age, fit to go forth to war: a number, it should be observed, which entirely excludes the sons of Levi. This census led to a more strict arrangement of the several families, and a more orderly disposition of the whole body; as the position of every tribe, and the name of the prince who was to rule over each, were divinely revealed to Moses, and recorded.

On this occasion, also, the recommendation of Jethro appears to have been carried into effect; and Moses appointed captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens. These were to hear complaints, arbitrate in disputes, and refer those which were too important or difficult for them to decide to the grade next above them, and, if necessary, to Moses himself. Thus was the host of Israel fully organized, and a regular gradation of officers established, which insured strict order, and, considering the character of their laws, morality also.

All these arrangements having been effected, and the civil and ecclesiastical polity which God had appointed having been completed, as far as this could be done in the desert, the cloud of the Divine Presence arose from off the tabernacle, and led the way to the wilderness of Paran. This being the appointed signal for journeying, the tents were immediately struck, and the host of Israel left Sinai.

The following was the order in which the tribes marched:—In the first place went the standard of the tribe of Judah under Nahshon, accompanied by the tribe of Issachar under Nethaneel, and the tribe of Zebulun under Eliab.

Then followed the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari, bearing the tabernacle.

Next to these marched the tribe of Reuben with their standard under Elizur, with the tribe of Simeon under Shelumiel, and the tribe of Gad under Eliasaph.

Following these came the Kohathites, bearing the sanctuary; the order being for the Gershonites and Merarites to erect the tabernacles at the next encampment by the time these arrived.

After these went the children of Ephraim with their standard under Elishama, accompanied by the host of Manasseh under Gamaliel, and that of Benjamin under Abidan.

The rear was made up of the tribe of Dan with its standard under Abiezer, attended by Asher under Pagiel, and Naphtali under Ahira.

"Thus were the journeyings of the children of Israel according to their armies," Num. x, 28; and thus regularly and orderly did this nation pass on their way through the desert.

It is supposed that it was when commencing this journey from Sinai that Moses so earnestly entreated Hobab, the son of his father-in-law, to accompany the people of Israel in their march. He at first declined, and Moses urged him still further. Whether he persisted in his refusal, or afterwards consented, we are not here informed; but the subsequent history shows that he accompanied the tribes of Israel. (See Shuckford, vol. ii, p. 136, *note*.)

When, by the rising of the cloud from the tabernacle, it was known that the camp was to remove, as soon as the whole people were ready, and the ark was carried forward, Moses stood and cried aloud, "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee." And when the cloud stayed, to mark out an encampment, he said, "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel." Num. x, 35, 36.

On the cloud's resting in the wilderness of Paran, the people complained. We are not told what was the cause of these complaints; but they provoked the Lord to anger, so that he sent a fire among them, which destroyed many, and which was only stayed by the earnest prayer of Moses. Therefore was the name of this encampment called Taberah.

Soon afterward, the people, incited by the clamors of the mixed multitude that went up with them out of Egypt, murmured against God and against Moses, saying, they loathed the manna, and were quite dried up for want of better food; that they remembered with strong desire the flesh, fish, and vegetables of Egypt; and could not endure the restrictions under which they were now placed. And they wept aloud, saying, "Who shall give us flesh to eat?" Numbers xi, 4.

This conduct was highly displeasing to God, and it affected Moses in an unusual manner; so that he cried unto the Lord in the language of the most bitter grief: "Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing-father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers? Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus

with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness." Num. xi, 12-15.

Moses was not afraid of the wrath of the king of Egypt; but the tears of his people entirely subdued him, and he chose death rather than life. The Lord then commanded him to "gather seventy men of the elders of Israel unto the tabernacle of the congregation." And further, the Lord said, "Say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow, and ye shall eat flesh. Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days nor twenty days; but even a whole month." Verses 16-20.

This announcement appears to have taken Moses by surprise; for he said in reply, "The people among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? And the Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lord's hand waxed short?" Verses 21-23.

The whole of this case shows how fully the government of this people, and all the necessary provision for them, were under the immediate direction of God. With all the wisdom and experience of Moses, he could not conceive the possibility of such a course being adopted. But all this was done. The seventy elders were selected, and commanded to repair to the tabernacle of the congregation; when the Spirit of the Lord descended upon those who were present, and they prophesied. It is also worthy of observation, that the same gift was communicated to two of these, Eldad and Medad, who, although named, did not appear at the door of the tabernacle. Joshua, seeing this, and regarding it as a slight put upon Moses, inasmuch as they had not complied with his direction, cried, "My lord Moses, forbid them." But this interference only served to elicit from this man of God the noble reply, "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!" Verses 28, 29.

This case deserves more serious attention than it has usually received. Prior to this, every necessary arrangement had been made for the government and direction of this immense host: organization, civil polity, even ecclesiastical order, could do no more. Yet Moses felt the overwhelming burden of the whole people, and was sinking under the weight of their care. And how did Jehovah meet the case? By a religious provision. He gave unto seventy men the spirit of prophecy, and thus endued them with divine power to uphold his honor, and communicate his will to the masses of the people: and, what is worthy of observation, this was done in a manner which proved that a breach of order, though not commended,

did not obstruct the course of this spiritual gift, nor lead Moses to condemn the exercise of it under those circumstances.

The predicted supply of flesh was also given; for the Lord sent forth a wind, which brought up an immense number of quails from the sea; and the people stood up all that day, and the night, and the following day, and secured an ample provision. But though the Lord condescended thus to comply with their request, he at the same time manifested his anger against their carnal lusting; for while they were eating in the most eager, and perhaps ravenous, manner, the Lord smote the people with a very great plague, and many of them died; and he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah, or "the graves of lust," because there they buried the people that lusted. This plague having ceased, the people journeyed from thence to Hazeroth. This appears to have been in the direct route to Canaan.

At this station, also, the Hebrew leader had to sustain a very severe trial and opposition. Here "Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married." Num. xii, 1. This, however, appears to have been only the ostensible cause of the quarrel; for we are told that, instead of confining their complaint to this point, they said, "Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not also spoken by us?" verse 2: language which shows that Aaron and his sister had given way to jealous feeling respecting the position and influence of their brother. Nothing could be more likely to defeat the purposes of Providence than this unnatural opposition to the divinely appointed leader of Israel. It is therefore said, in the most expressive language, that "the Lord heard it." He did not leave his servant to defend himself: *he heard it*, and came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and suddenly summoned Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to stand before him. The Lord then said, that he had never revealed his will to either of them, or to any others, in so extraordinary a manner as he had to Moses, and that therefore they ought to have been afraid to speak against and contradict him. And in order most effectually to justify Moses to the whole congregation, Miriam was struck with leprosy, and ordered to be put out of the camp for seven days. After which, in answer to the prayer of her brother, she was restored.

This circumstance was not only a great personal affliction to Moses, (see *Appendix*, note 23;) it was also regarded as a public calamity, and the journeying of the people was consequently suspended until Miriam was again received into the camp. Afterward the host of Israel went to Rithmah or Kadesh-Barnea. This station was

in the Desert of Paran, some distance to the south of Beersheba, and, consequently, on the borders of Palestine. (See *Appendix*, note 24.) When the congregation had reached this encampment, the Lord commanded Moses to select a person of distinction from each of the tribes, and to send these twelve men to search out the land of Canaan, and to bring him a report of its strength or weakness, riches or poverty; whether it was pastoral, or filled with cities and towns; and of the character and numbers of its inhabitants. These men, having been appointed to this duty, proceeded on their journey. We are not informed of the exact time when this took place; but as we are told that it was in "the time of the first ripe grapes, (Num. xiii, 20,) it is sufficiently evident that the spies were sent out in the latter part of July, in the second year of the sojourn in the wilderness, and, consequently, between sixteen and seventeen months after the exodus. This season appears to have been the time appointed by God, for the accomplishment of their journey, and for the purposes of their religious instruction and discipline. When the Lord brought them out of Egypt, he could have led them from Suez over the Isthmus, and through the Desert to Gaza in a few days. But this was not the divine purpose. (See *Appendix*, note 25.) The principal object of Jehovah, in this journey of the Hebrews, was not to get them by the shortest route over the intermediate space, and to place them in possession of Palestine in the shortest period of time. The same power which provided them water and manna, and which gave them Jericho, would have effected all this very speedily. But the divine purpose embraced objects far beyond these temporal circumstances, and was opposed by obstacles infinitely greater than the difficulties of the passage through the wilderness, or the martial power of the Canaanites. The Israelites had been elected as the peculiar people of God; they had to be prepared for this vocation. It was necessary, therefore, that they should receive an entire religious economy by special revelation from heaven; and their sojourn in the wilderness afforded ample opportunity for this. It was also essential that the Israelites should be made practically acquainted with the duties which the theocratic government under which they were placed imposed upon them. They had to learn obedience to God, to acquire a strong and steady trust in him; and that not only in what is usually regarded as a religious sense, such as receiving the doctrines of revealed truth, and submitting to their influence; they were called to obey God, and trust in him, as their King and earthly Governor. The wants to which they were subjected in the wilderness, and the means by which they had been supplied; the dangers of their way, and the

manner in which they had been averted, were adapted to this end, and should have disciplined the Hebrew mind into an intelligent and entire submission to the will of God.

It appears, also, that, in the estimation of Jehovah, these opportunities, influences, and interpositions ought to have been sufficient for this purpose. He who fully knew their mental and moral condition on leaving Egypt, and who exactly comprehended their destiny and their duty, saw that the means which had been employed should have prepared them for entering into the promised possession, and for rising to the dignity of their glorious vocation. And it will be perceived that the mode adopted in selecting and sending the twelve chieftains, to go and see the country, was exactly adapted to test the Hebrew people in respect of this important point,—to bring out distinctly and decisively the fact, whether they had so subjected themselves to the divine will, as to have obtained that preparation of mind which the gracious dealings of God were calculated and intended to produce.

According to the instructions which they had received, the twelve men who were sent to spy out the land journeyed through the country for forty days; and when they returned they said, "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it." (Presenting a cluster of grapes which they had cut down at Eshcol, and carried between two of them on a staff.) "Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great." Num. xiii, 27, 28. Thus did the spies discourage the people; for they said that the men of the land were giants; "and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." Verse 33. So strong and general was the impression which this report produced, that, notwithstanding the efforts of Caleb and Joshua, who earnestly declared that, if they marched at once on the country, they would certainly be able to take possession of it, the whole congregation rebelled against God, proposed to elect a captain to take them back to Egypt, and even threatened to stone Caleb and Joshua, because they dissented from the report of their companions. So fierce was this rebellion, that it was only stayed by the appearance of the glory of the Lord in the tabernacle of the congregation. On this occasion, again, Jehovah threatened to disinherit and destroy the whole people, and to make of Moses a greater nation. But Moses repeated his supplication for Israel, basing his prayer on a deep regard for the Divine honor: he was heard, and his prayer granted; the people were pardoned; but this irrevocable sentence was pronounced on them,—that of all the men who were twenty

years old and upwards on their leaving Egypt, none should enter into Canaan except Caleb and Joshua; that, as they wished they had been slain in the wilderness, so their carcasses should fall in the wilderness; that their children, of whom they had spoken, as being made a prey, should go up and possess the good land which God had promised to their fathers; and that, for the accomplishment of this purpose, their wanderings in the wilderness should be protracted to forty years. As a proof of the anger of God, and an earnest of his inflexible purpose, those ten men of the spies who had contributed to produce this discontent, and to foster this rebellion, were immediately destroyed by a plague from the Lord, and Joshua and Caleb alone survived of the twelve.

In this conduct of the spies and the people, there is ample proof of the unfaithfulness, the practical infidelity, of Israel. Notwithstanding the miracles which they had witnessed, and even in the presence of the fact that they, their wives, and their children were miraculously fed with manna from heaven every day, they could not trust God for the accomplishment of his word. If the pious reasonings and earnest exhortations of Joshua and Caleb are excepted, we do not find in the statement of the other spies, or in the lamentation of the people, any believing reference to God. "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we," (Num. xiii, 31,) is the infidel opinion which is the ground of all their fear and rebellion. They did not take God and his covenant mercy into the account, and therefore proved that they did not really regard themselves as his, so as to trust fully in his manifested goodness, wisdom, and power.

This unfaithfulness sealed the fate of a generation of Hebrews, induced a painful wandering of thirty-eight years longer in the wilderness, and thus threw into the distance the fulfillment of God's covenant promise.

A further illustration of the dark and skeptical character of the Hebrew mind at this time, is found in their conduct immediately after the Lord had declared that these men should not enter into the Land of Promise, but wander in the wilderness the remainder of their lives. They immediately resolved, in defiance of this purpose, to invade the Canaanites: a proof that a faithless distrust of God, and an extravagant self-confidence, proceed from the same cause. Although Moses earnestly dissuaded them from their purpose, and remained in the camp, a multitude of them set out on this expedition. But, as might have been expected, they were met by an armed body of Canaanites and Amalekites, who "smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah." Num. xiv, 45.

Soon after this defeat, and perhaps, in part at least, the result of the disappointment and morbid feeling which these circumstances occasioned, another and very formidable rebellion was raised against the authority of God, and the administration of his servant Moses.

The leaders of this movement were Korah, of the tribe of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, of the tribe of Reuben. "They rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown. And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" Num. xvi, 2, 3. Upon hearing this, Moses fell on his face; and having obtained, in answer to prayer, direction from God, he addressed Korah and all his company, saying, "Even to-morrow the Lord will show who are his, and who is holy. This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company; and put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord to-morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi." Verses 5-7. After some further expostulation with them, Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram; but they refused, and in most violent terms charged Moses with having brought the people out of a land of plenty, to kill them in the wilderness; alleging that he had violated all the promises which he had made, of bringing them into a better land; that his object was to put out their eyes; and that he treated them as though they were utterly ignorant, and fit only to be the creatures of his will.

Taking this conspiracy as a whole, it was undoubtedly the most formidable of all those by which the administration of Moses had been opposed; and being raised just after the people had been doomed to wander nearly forty years longer in the wilderness, and when, in consequence, gloomy discontent sat brooding on the public mind, it was likely to exercise a most pernicious influence, and to be productive of results the most injurious. All these circumstances rendered it necessary that it should be suddenly and signally defeated by Divine Power. And so it was: for, on the morrow, when the two hundred and fifty men appeared at the door of the tabernacle with censers and incense, and Dathan, Abiram, and their company stood in their tents, Moses, having made supplication for the congregation, and having obtained directions from God, commanded all the people to separate themselves from the company of Dathan and Abiram. "And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind.

If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord." Verses 28-30.

This was a bold and noble assertion of divine approval, and placed his claims before the whole congregation subject to an immediate and infallible test. Jehovah affirmed the divine vocation of his servant; for when Moses had just finished his address, and while Dathan and Abiram stood with all their company in the doors of their tents, in defiance of his authority, the earth suddenly opened, and they and their tents, and all that they had, went down into the pit; and the earth closed over them, and they were blotted out from the number of mankind, and known no more upon earth. Meanwhile a fire came forth from the Lord, and slew the two hundred and fifty men that bore censers. Thus did both sections of this rebellious conspiracy meet a punishment instant, miraculous, and overwhelming.

Yet, notwithstanding this display of Divine Power, "on the morrow all the congregation gathered themselves together, and again murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord." This provoked the anger of the Lord, and Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before him; and the glory of the Lord was seen in the door of the tabernacle. And Moses called Aaron, and commanded him to take his censer, and put fire therein from the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for the people; for he perceived that wrath was gone forth from the Lord, and that the plague was begun. Aaron did so, and ran into the midst of the people, and stood between the living and the dead, and the plague was stayed; and there died of the people on this occasion, besides those who perished on the preceding day, fourteen thousand and seven hundred persons.

These terrible judgments appear to have had their desired effect. The rebellious spirit of the people was subdued, and they saw that they had no alternative but to submit to the authority of the Lord, and the direction of his servant. But to settle forever the question of the divine appointment of the Aaronic priesthood, the Lord commanded the people, through Moses, to select a prince from every tribe of Israel, and to require every one of them to write his name upon his rod, and these rods were laid up before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness; Moses assuring all the people, at the same time, that the Lord had said, "The man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom." On the morrow, Moses went into the tabernacle

and took the rods, and brought them forth. Every one knew his rod from his name being written on it, and, lo, Aaron's rod had blossomed, and brought forth almonds. The divine choice being thus made manifest, Aaron's rod was again returned to the tabernacle of witness, as a testimony of this fact to future gainsayers.

From that day we hear no more of the Israelites for nearly thirty-eight years. During all this time they were led up and down in the wilderness, sometimes approaching the Red Sea, at others coming nearer to Canaan, until we again find them at this same station, Kadesh-Barnea. No sooner had they arrived here than we are informed of the death of Miriam, who was buried at this place. (See *Appendix*, note 26.) Here also the people were distressed for want of water, and complained to Moses in very violent language. Moses and Aaron went to the door of the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them; and the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink." Num. xx, 8. It is necessary to pay very particular attention to the terms of this passage, inasmuch as it was in consequence of some crime or disobedience, committed in this instance, that Moses and Aaron were not permitted to enter into the promised land. Having received this command, "Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." Num. xx, 9-12.

The concluding words of the last sentence are certainly deeply affecting. That Moses and Aaron, who had done so much, and suffered so greatly, for the accomplishment of this object; that Moses, who, in the most generous and self-denying spirit, had renounced all personal aggrandizement for the purpose of carrying into effect the Divine Will concerning this people; that he, and Aaron, the first high priest, should not be permitted to enter Canaan, but be judicially cut off in the wilderness, is a fact which strikingly exhibits the perfect holiness and inflexible justice of God.

Whatever was the precise nature of the transgression committed

by Moses and Aaron, at this place, and for which they were thus doomed, it in no wise affected their official position or authority. Moses still retained the direction of public affairs, and was favored with the same intimate intercourse with Jehovah, and Aaron still officiated as high priest in the sacred services of the sanctuary. (See *Appendix*, note 27.)

While the Israelites were encamped at Kadesh, Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom, requesting him to grant them a peaceable passage through his territory, promising to do no injury, but to pay for whatever they required; and urging the request on the ground of their family relationship, and the severe sufferings they had endured, which are spoken of as well known to the Edomites. But the king of Edom refused, and marched a strong body of men to the frontier, to resist the attempt in case it should be made. This refusal was a bitter disappointment to Israel.

It appears that at this time it was known to be the purpose of their heavenly Guide, not to bring them into Canaan from the south, where they would immediately have to encounter all the difficulty of the hill-country of Hebron, and the martial power of the Philistines; but to give them an entrance into the country from the east, which would afford them great advantage in their first aggressive operations.

In all probability it was this prohibition to enter Canaan from the south, which deterred the Israelites from punishing Arad, king of a Canaanitish nation, when about this time he came out and fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners; contenting themselves with vowing to destroy this people utterly at a future period.

As the country of Edom consisted chiefly of a long narrow ridge of hills, extending from the mountains of Moab at the south-east corner of Palestine, to the very borders of Ezion-Gaber on the eastern head of the Red Sea, it stood directly in the way of the Israelites. If, in compliance with their request, they had been allowed to march through the Wady El-Ghuweir, a narrow defile, which, running east and west, quite divides the mountain chain between Bozrah and Mount Hor,* or by any other passage, a few hours would have transported them from the wilderness west of Idumea to the borders of the Great Desert which lay to the east of it, where they would be very near the place from whence they were to begin to take possession of the land. The cruel refusal of Edom, therefore, compelled them to travel along the eastern border of Idumea to Ezion-Gaber, and then, turning round the end of the mountain ridge, to return on the east side to the land of Moab. This was

* See Robinson's *Bibl. Res.*, vol. ii, p. 551; and Wilson's *Map of Sinai and Arabia*.

their only course, and it was taken; they had therefore "to compass the land of Edom."

While pursuing this journey, they halted at Mount Hor, where Aaron died. This event took place by the immediate appointment of God. Moses, Aaron, and Eleazer his son, were even commanded to go up into the Mount. There Moses, by divine command, stripped off Aaron's sacerdotal garments, and put them on Eleazer. And Aaron died there on the Mount, being one hundred and twenty-three years old; and the congregation mourned for him thirty days.

From Mount Hor the host of Israel went to Zalmonah. Numbers xxxiii, 41. It was here, probably,* that "the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way," (Num. xxi, 4,) and they spake against God and against Moses. The immediate cause of this sin might have been their present apparently unnecessary toil. As God had prohibited their making any aggression upon Edom, and had not interfered by his own power to enable them to cross this narrow territory; so it might have been imagined, that when they reached the borders of Canaan, he might also be unable or unwilling to put them in possession of the country. These unbelieving thoughts, excited by the difficulties of the way, provoked them to rebellion. It is worthy of remark, that, although the sin of Israel was of the same kind in their several rebellions, yet the mode of punishment is constantly varied, to show that these inflictions came immediately from God, and did not arise out of the natural difficulties of their way. On this occasion "the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." Numbers xxi, 6. This chastisement brought them to a sense of their sin; and, when thus humbled, Moses prayed for them, and was divinely directed to make a serpent of brass, and set it on a pole, that every bitten Hebrew, looking upon this brazen serpent, might be healed. Thus were the people delivered from this plague. (See *Appendix*, note 28.)

From Zalmonah they journeyed, making a temporary halt at several unimportant stations, until they had completely rounded the territory of Edom, and reached the eastern frontier of the land of Moab. Being forbidden to molest the descendants of Lot, they continued their course until they had reached the border of Moab to the north, which is thus described by the sacred writer: "From thence they removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites: for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites." Numbers xxi, 13. This statement clearly defines the position of the Israelites at that moment. They had passed Edom and Moab by traveling

northward through the desert on their eastern frontier until they had crossed the Arnon, a small river that ran from the east toward the west, falling into the Dead Sea, and separating the land of Moab from that of the Amorites. This encampment was therefore at the north-east corner of the country occupied by the Amorites, on the east bank of the Jordan.

From this place Moses sent a message to the king of the Amorites, requesting a peaceable passage through his territory, and engaging to do no harm to persons or property. This request was refused, as it had been by the king of Edom; and Sihon king of the Amorites gathered all his people together, and came out to resist Israel. On this occasion it was impossible to avoid a conflict; for this was one of the nations which the promise of God had mentioned by name, as destined to be cast out before the Israelites, and their land given to them for a possession. Besides this, the district lay so directly between the Israelites and Canaan, that it might be regarded as the key to the whole country. Here, therefore, Moses had, for the first time, to lead his people into martial contest for the possession of a part of the land which the Lord had promised to give to the house of Jacob. The result proved the faithfulness of Jehovah: the Amorites with their king were completely defeated and utterly destroyed. Having taken possession of Heshbon, the city of Sihon, and its villages, Moses marched against another king of the same nation, Og, who reigned in Bashan. He was a man of giant stature, and came with his army, and fought with Israel; but he, also, and his sons, and his people, fell before Israel: so the Hebrews took possession of all the lands of the Amorites on the east side of Jordan. (See *Appendix*, note 29.)

After the Israelites had obtained these victories, and were encamped by the river Jordan, and Moses was employed in making arrangements for the regulation and security of the recent conquest, the Hebrews were subjected to a series of observations, which, in their object and results, form a most remarkable portion of the history. The Moabites, although Israel had left them unmolested, had seen with deep interest how suddenly and completely the Amorites had been destroyed, and were greatly alarmed lest they should be the next victims of their fearful power. Under the influence of this apprehension, Balak, king of Moab, hoping thereby to obtain an increase of strength or confidence, sent messengers to Balaam, a very celebrated Gentile prophet or diviner of Mesopotamia, requesting that he would come and exercise his divination against Israel, and pronounce a malediction upon them. After having twice refused, Balaam at length accompanied Balak's messengers to Moab; where,

notwithstanding the object of his mission was the very reverse, he, at various places, and in language of unequalled sublimity, delivered a series of prophecies exhibiting the power, glory, and prosperity which Israel should attain under the fostering care of Jehovah.*

But although the predictions of Balaam were all decidedly favorable to Israel, he appears to have given advice to the king, which, when carried into effect, had nearly been fatal to the house of Jacob. It seems, from all that Holy Scripture has said on this subject, that Balaam, having assured Balak of the certain success which should attend the progress of the Israelites, advised him to promote matrimonial connections between the women of Moab and the men of Israel. Whether the design or foresight of the prophet extended beyond this measure, as a means of warding off any warlike invasion of Moab, we cannot say; but the results far outstepped all that was merely prudential and politic in this proposal. The women of Moab freely met the men of Israel; a scandalous and guilty intercourse soon prevailed to a great extent; and this, we are told, led to the Israelites sacrificing to Baal-peor, and joining in the impure rites of his worship.

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the complete organization which existed among the people at this time, such practices should have been allowed to prevail to a great extent, without any effort to check their progress. It would seem as if the rulers of Israel had been carried away by this delusion; and hence, when Jehovah interposed, he commanded Moses to "take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord." Num. xxv, 4. While the necessary investigation was being made, and Moses was saying unto the judges of Israel, "Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor," and the serious part of the congregation were weeping before the tabernacle on account of this sin, a prince of Israel, Zimri, of the tribe of Simeon, was seen leading a princess of Midian into his tent. Fired with zeal for the cause of the God of Israel, Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, seized a javelin, followed them into the tent, and slew them there. This act of righteous zeal stayed the plague which had gone out from the wrath of the Lord, and which had already destroyed twenty-four thousand men.

Immediately after this event, the Lord commanded Moses to take the number of the people, according to the same rule which had been followed on preceding occasions; namely, by taking account of all males from twenty years old and upwards,—all that were able to go forth to war. From this inquiry it appeared, that the total of the

* The case of Balaam will be fully considered in "The History and Religion of the Gentile Nations."

able-bodied adult males was 601,730, being 1,820 less than they numbered thirty-eight years before. (See *Appendix*, note 30.) Such was the result of the repeated rebellions and iniquities of this people. But for the loss by the plague in the sin of Baal-peor, instead of this decrease there would have been an increase of more than twenty-two thousand men. The numbers given in these different accounts afford important information upon one point of great consequence. Considering the previous rapid multiplication of the Hebrew people, it might have been supposed, had not this information been given, that the Israelites, when they left Egypt, were not sufficiently numerous and powerful to subdue Canaan, and that it required the added increase of another generation to enable them to effect its subjugation. The result of these two numberings dissipates the delusion, and shows that when the land was actually subdued, Israel was numerically less than when at Sinai. Sin never imparted strength to Israel.

It is also worthy of observation, that the number of families given in this census is fifty-seven; to which if we add Jacob and his sons, we have seventy, the exact number that went down into Egypt.

Soon after this census, the Lord commanded Moses to ascend Mount Abarim, and from thence view the land which he had promised to give for an inheritance unto Israel, assuring him at the same time that, after he had been thus far gratified, he should be gathered unto his people, as Aaron his brother had been gathered; because they had both sinned against God in the wilderness of Zin.

Few scenes in history are more interesting than this; and seldom do we see human nature presented to our view invested with more real grace and dignity. Although to Moses especially it must have been an object of paramount interest and importance to see his people take possession of the land of promise; yet, when this man of God heard the fiat which destroyed all these hopes, and consigned him to an obscure grave in the wilderness, no murmur escaped his lips: he did not deprecate his doom, or supplicate a reversal of his sentence. Nor does this silence arise from a confounded mind, or a paralyzed intellect bending beneath the weight of his fate and his years. His spirit is still active, his judgment retains its strength, his soul is as ardent as ever; but, even here, all these are called into lively exercise, not for himself, but for his people. On hearing the mandate of Heaven, Moses gave utterance to the following earnest and important prayer: "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the

Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd." Num. xxvii, 16, 17. Here is the same loftiness of spirit, rising high above every selfish consideration, the same zeal for the honor of God, the same devoted concern for the welfare of his people, which had heretofore marked his entire public character. We may wade through many folios of history and biography, narrating the mighty deeds of warriors, statesmen, and professed patriots, before we find another case equal to it in interest.

The supplication of Moses was heard; and Joshua, who had already distinguished himself on several occasions, was appointed to be the future leader of the Israelitish host. Moses was commanded to carry this appointment into effect in the most formal manner. Joshua was set before the high-priest in the presence of the whole congregation; when Moses laid his hands on him, and delivered a charge to him suited to the importance of the occasion; and Joshua was then declared to have access unto God by the ministry of the priest through Urim and Thummim. Thus was Joshua publicly recognized as the successor of Moses in the government of Israel.

Soon after this appointment, Moses was commanded to attack and destroy the Midianites. For this service twelve thousand men were selected, one thousand from each tribe. Phinehas, the son of the high priest, with the "holy instruments and trumpets," attended the expedition. The name of the military commander is not mentioned,—most probably it was Joshua; but the case is represented as if the whole business was conducted under the immediate direction and authority of God.

The result of this expedition was the entire destruction of the Midianites, none of the people being preserved alive, but female children and virgins. The booty was immense, and was divided into two equal parts, those who went to the war taking one, and the rest of the congregation the other. The whole was subjected to a tax in favor of the sanctuary and the Levites, the soldiers being required to present a five-hundredth part of their portion, and the people a fiftieth of theirs. Besides this, the miscellaneous booty was so great, that the captains of thousands, and the captains of hundreds, when they mustered the army on their return from the expedition, and found that they had not lost one man, presented a further offering to the Lord, of jewels of gold, chains, bracelets, earrings, &c., amounting in all to 16,750 shekels, or about £37,869 sterling.

One circumstance is distinctly noticed by the sacred historian in connection with this case, which must not be overlooked. Balaam the prophet was slain in this war. Being with the Midianites, he

perished in the destruction: a fearful proof that divine gifts and good desires do not always lead to a happy end.

By these warlike operations the Israelites had obtained possession of a very important district on the east bank of the Jordan. This induced the tribe of Reuben and the tribe of Gad to apply to Moses for leave to settle in this country; which, on condition that their fighting men should still continue with the main body of the army until all the tribes had obtained possession of the country, was granted. These tribes, together with the half-tribe of Manasseh, therefore, built towns for their residence, and made folds for their cattle. These were the last public operations over which Moses presided. From this period the man of God appears to have devoted himself exclusively to the spiritual duties of his office, by impressing on the hearts of the Israelites a deep sense of their obligation to keep the commandments of God, and by persuading them that this was not only their duty, but that all their personal happiness, and all their national honor and prosperity, depended on their fidelity to the covenant of Jehovah.

Perhaps no man was ever placed in a position so exciting, important, and responsible, as that in which Moses stood at this juncture; and we have nothing in the whole history of the world more noble and effective than his language and deportment on this occasion.

He had renounced all the riches, honors, and pleasures of Egypt, and associated himself with a poor, oppressed, and despised people. As their leader, he had brought them out of Egypt, and for forty years had directed their various movements in the wilderness. The object and end of all this was the possession of Canaan; and they had now arrived at the border of this country, had subdued several hostile tribes, and taken possession of a part of the country. The reward of forty years' incessant toil was now within his reach; the object for which he had made every sacrifice, and endured unnumbered trials, was placed fully before his eyes. Yet he is doomed to die with his greatest earthly wishes ungratified. In these circumstances, as we have observed, no murmur escapes him; nay, he not only bows to the Divine will, but enters heartily into it, loses sight of himself, and concentrates all his undiminished energy to the good of his charge.

When it is admitted that he acted and spoke under the plenary influence of the Holy Spirit, we need not wonder that the highest wisdom and the richest purity marked all his steps. But it may be useful to glance at a few points in this remarkable history. In the first place, Moses entreated the Lord to appoint a leader to succeed him. This was done; and the appointment not only led Joshua

to prepare for the duties of his high station; but the public manner in which it was made gave to the advices, commands, and exhortations of Moses, all the pathos and power which attach to the words of a dying friend.

Of this Moses fully availed himself. He supplied every omission in past instruction, repeated the most important laws, enjoined obedience with all the authority of a divinely appointed lawgiver, reasoned and exhorted with all the earnestness of an affectionate parent, and, soaring into the highest regions of prophecy and poetry, painted glorious visions of the blessedness of obedience, and showed with equal vividness and power the fearful consequences of transgression.

Attention is directed to the following brief sketch of these addresses and events:—

1. Moses delivered his charge to the people. Deut. xxxi, 1–7.
2. He then gave an encouraging and consolatory address to Joshua. Verses 7, 8.
3. He completed the writing of the law, and delivered it to the priests. Verses 9–13.
4. Moses and Joshua are summoned to meet the Lord in the sanctuary, where the Lord gave a charge to Joshua, and taught Moses a song. Verses 14–21.
5. Moses delivered a further charge to Joshua, and gave the law to the Levites. Verses 23–30.
6. Moses wrote his song, and rehearsed it in the ears of the people. Verses 22, 30; xxxii, 1–43.
7. Moses delivered a farewell address to the people. Deut. xxxii, 44–47.
8. Moses received the command to go up into the Mount to die. Verses 48–52.
9. Moses finally delivered his blessing to the people; referring to each tribe in detail; giving prophetic intimations of their future characters, circumstances, and destiny; closing with a brilliant description of the glorious condition of Israel, on account of its covenant relation to the everlasting God. Deut. xxxiii.
10. Moses ascended the mountain of Nebo, even the top of Pisgah, and died, according to the word of the Lord. Deut. xxxiv, 1–5.

All “the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days,” Deut. xxxiv, 8; and we can well imagine that this lamentation was deep and universal. Never had sovereign, general, or leader displayed so much disinterested public spirit, or devoted himself so fully to the interests of his people, as had Moses. Well might they mourn the loss of a man like him. We cannot here avoid referring to the very obvious bearing of this event on the religious opinions and views of the Israelites. When learned writers teach, that this people had no knowledge of a future life; that they were utterly ignorant of any higher or clearer views of religion, than arose out of the ceremonial law; we incline to ask them, If those opinions are correct, what must the Israelites have thought of the fate of

Moses and Aaron? Here are two men eminently owned of God as his servants,—men who labored long and faithfully in his service. They are, nevertheless, cut off at the end of their toilsome career, and deprived of the prize for which they had labored. It is true, they had sinned; but this single transgression, which it is very difficult to define, could scarcely, on the principles already referred to, have been made the ground for such severe punishment. If an inadvertency of thought, or an unadvised word, were to cut off all hope, and cause the severest penalty, who would escape? If, as is fully believed, the Israelites knew the certainty of a future life, and the reality of spiritual religion, then the case of these eminent men was admonitory in the extreme. Then the people would see that although their leaders were deprived of earthly joy because of their transgressions, they had passed to a heavenly reward. In fact, the whole tenor of the account proves this to have been the case, and shows that public opinion at the time must have been in accordance with these views. Could it have been the purpose of Heaven that the last pathetic addresses of Moses, his song, and his blessing, should be regarded by the Israelites as the effusions of a man just about to perish under the divine malediction? All history, and all antiquity, reject the supposition, and prove that the doctrine of eternal rewards and punishments was known and believed.

In closing our account of this unparalleled journey, it may be necessary to make a few remarks on the manner of the encampment formed by Moses. When we remind the reader that this body contained a population of both sexes and all ages, to the number of two millions or more, it will be obvious that the arrangements by which they were guided in the several places of their stay, during a sojourn of forty years, and a journey of many hundreds of miles, must have required great wisdom and skill in their device and in their execution. Yet it is a singular and important fact, that, disposed as the people were to murmur at every privation, and to reproach their leader on account of every inconvenience which they were called to endure, we never hear them complain of any suffering occasioned by want of accommodation or deficient arrangements in their encampments.

There are many curious questions arising out of these arrangements, to which it may not now be possible to give satisfactory answers; but we have sufficient information to enable us to form a general view of the case. In the centre of the camp stood the court of the tabernacle. This was about fifty-eight yards long and twenty-nine yards wide. In this area stood the tabernacle, as the royal residence of the God of Israel. Here he dwelt among his people,

and over this royal tent rested the cloud of the Divine Presence. The entrance to it was at the east end. Here likewise, immediately before this entrance, were the tents of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons, the priests. On the other three sides of the tabernacle the several families of the Levites had their position: on the south side, the Kohathites, numbering, according to the last census, 2,750 men; on the west, the sons of Gershon, 2,630; and on the north, the family of Merari, 3,200. This part of the camp must have occupied a very considerable space, especially as, on account of its sanctity, it would be regarded as the ground on which the congregation assembled for worship. Josephus states that, except for this purpose, none of the people were allowed to come nearer than two thousand cubits to the tabernacle. This would require a space of a thousand yards on each side of the sacred tent, or, in the whole, a square of more than a mile.

On each side of this space the twelve tribes were placed in four separate and distinct bodies: Judah, 74,600, in the centre on the east side of the tabernacle; Zebulun, 57,400, on his right wing; and Issachar, 54,400, on his left. So that this division comprised an army of 186,400 men, capable of war, with all their wives, children, and property: their front was toward the east, with their cattle and substance in the rear, or toward the inner part of the whole encampment. On the south side, Reuben, 46,500, occupied the centre, with Gad, 45,650, on the right, and Simeon, 59,300, on the left; making together a force of 151,450 men. The north side was occupied by Dan in the centre, 62,700, with Naphtali, 52,400, on the right, and Asher, 41,500, on the left; making together a body of 157,600 men. On the west, Ephraim, 40,500, in the centre, Benjamin, 35,400, on the right, and Manasseh, 32,200, on the left; making together a force of 108,100 on this side.

Thus the whole camp lay in the form of a square, every side occupied by men of war, covering their families and property, and surrounding the priests, Levites, and the sanctuary of God. In this arrangement we see that, as far as possible, the peculiar relationship of the heads of the tribes was maintained. All the descendants of Rachel occupied one division of the encampment. Three sons of Leah form the van. Two other sons of Leah, with one of Zilpah her maid, form the south division; and the remainder of the tribes, the north one. It must be further observed, in the subdivision of the tribes, that their family relationships were strictly adhered to, so that every one pitched by the standard of his father's house. This arrangement not only prevented bickerings and disputes, by placing every family in contact with near relations; but it also

maintained, throughout the entire multitude, an unbroken bond of brotherhood. Josephus unquestionably gave the opinions which prevailed among the Jews of his day, when he said, "When they set up the tabernacle, they received it into the midst of the camp, three of the tribes pitching their tents on each side of it; and roads were cut through the midst of these tents. It was like a well-appointed market; and everything was there ready for sale in due order; and all sorts of artificers were in the shops; and it resembled nothing so much as a city, that sometimes was movable and sometimes fixed."—*Antiquities*, vol. iii, sect. 12, p. 5.

In addition to the bonds of consanguinity and affinity, and natural authority of parents and chiefs, the whole body was divided, according to decimal notation, into sections, and officers appointed over tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands. Thus order was maintained, and regularity and subordination established.

When all these circumstances are taken into account, no plan can be conceived more calculated to secure the general good than that which was adopted, nor any more likely to make an impression on all the nations with whom they came into contact. Hence, when this multitudinous host, so carefully marshaled, so harmoniously blended together, with the sanctuary of Jehovah in the centre, and overshadowed with the cloud of his presence, was viewed by Balak and Balaam, we need not wonder at the terror-stricken aspect of the king of Moab, nor that the prophet should exclaim, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" Num. xxiv, 5.

CHAPTER II.

THE RELIGION OF THE HEBREWS IN THE WILDERNESS.

The Object of the Chapter—Religion of Jacob and his Sons when they entered Egypt—Of the Israelites at the Time of the Exodus—Their Idolatry in Egypt partial and secret—CHARACTER AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF DIVINE WORSHIP AT THIS TIME—Priests—Place of Worship—RELIGIOUS REVELATIONS MADE TO THE HEBREWS IN THE WILDERNESS—The Divine Author of these, the sacred Word—The Decalogue—Effects produced by its Revelation—The Tabernacle—Altar—Laver—The Holy, and the Most Holy Place, with their sacred Furniture—THE PRIESTHOOD—The sacred Vestments—Urim and Thummim—RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS—Day of Atonement—Feast of Tabernacles—Of Trumpets—New Moons—Sabbatical Year—The Sabbath—THE CHARACTER OF THIS RELIGIOUS SYSTEM—National and Theocratic—Object and Sanctions of the Theocracy—Future Rewards and Punishments known—The Theocracy national and general—The typical Character of the Mosaic Economy was to some extent understood by the ancient Hebrews.

A DIGEST of the religion of the Hebrews during their sojourn in the wilderness must include information on the following subjects:—The religion which Jacob and his sons took with them into Egypt; the change to which this religious system was subjected during the rapid multiplication of the people, throughout the two centuries of their residence in that country; the divine revelations of a strictly religious character which were made to them through Moses in the wilderness; and the religious economy which this people, in consequence, possessed at the close of their journeying.

The first of these subjects will here occupy only a brief space, as it has been fully discussed in "The History and Religion of the Patriarchal Age," to which the reader is referred. It will therefore be necessary only to repeat the substance of those conclusions which resulted from a lengthened discussion of the subject in that work.

In this inquiry, it was satisfactorily ascertained that man, in the earliest ages, was made acquainted with the being and perfections of God, and his government of the world; the fall and depravity of man, and the consequent evil of sin; the promise of a Redeemer, and the appointment of animal sacrifice, as typical of the efficacious atonement of His death; the reality and perpetuity of a future state, including a knowledge of rewards and punishments; the existence and authority of divine laws for the regulation of human conduct; and the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of giving effect, individually and generally, to the merciful purposes of God.

If these conclusions are just, it will be admitted that the religion of the early ages was founded on revealed truth; and that, wherever

that truth was obeyed, it produced a living, influential principle, which imparted to the individual a conscious witness of righteousness, an internal testimony that he pleased God. It is thus described by the inspired authority of the New Testament. Heb. xi, 4, 5.

The religion of the early patriarchs, therefore, whatever obscurity might have rested on some of its doctrinal elements, did not consist of an ignorant adoption of peculiar rites and laws, nor of a heartless acquiescence in certain dogmas. It was an efficient manifestation of the truth and grace of God. Yet, in some respects, great peculiarity attached to this initial dispensation. As far as we are informed, the people of those days possessed no authoritative written records of truth. The revelations with which they were favored were handed down, and preserved by *vivâ voce* testimony, from father to son. The manner of transmission was therefore that of oral tradition, the father of the family being the priest and teacher. It may be further observed, that those individuals who experienced the efficacy of this religion, had a distinct knowledge of Divine Providence, and a clear perception of the duty and the effects of prayer.

Such was the religion of Jacob when he went down into Egypt; such, there is reason to believe, was the religion of Joseph, and of the other sons of Israel, as far as knowledge and opinion could extend. How far the hearts of the latter were imbued with this faith, and their lives made subject to its truth, we have very slender means of determining.

The family of Jacob, consisting of seventy men, when located in Egypt, rapidly multiplied, and expanded into a nation. It becomes, therefore, important to ascertain to what extent the religion of the Israelites was affected during their sojourn. This inquiry is of more than ordinary consequence, inasmuch as it has been the common practice to refer any anomaly or difficulty found in the religious practices or institutions of the Hebrews, to the influence of Egyptian idolatry, and the consequent adoption of the rites and manners of that country.

It cannot be denied that, at first sight, there appears to be great plausibility in the presumption, that a family thus situated, and multiplying generation after generation, in the midst of an idolatrous and dominant nation, must have had their religious doctrines and practices, to some considerable extent, affected by those of the ruling powers, and of the surrounding population. But a careful review of the real circumstances of the case will show, that, if this influence operated at all, it was to a very limited extent.

In the first place, it is important to observe, that when the family of Jacob came into Egypt, they were described by Joseph, and they

described themselves, as persons so different in their manners and occupation from the Egyptians, that, for this reason, a separate and distinct district was allotted for their location. This measure, while it clearly recognized the peculiar views and habits of the Hebrews, removed them, as far as possible, from the range of Egyptian influence.

It must further be noted, that the pure patriarchal faith was frequently inculcated on the Israelites during this period; the addresses and predictions delivered in the last days of Jacob were full of this kind of instruction, and the dying charge of Joseph was alike adapted to imprint the great elements of patriarchal faith upon the minds of the Hebrew people.

But perhaps nothing tended so effectually to preserve the Israelites from Egyptian idolatry, as the jealousy, persecution, and consummate cruelty with which they were treated in that country. The ostensible cause of this oppression (Exod. i, 9, 10) may be taken as a proof, that the descendants of Jacob had preserved all their peculiarities, and that the line of demarkation between them and the Egyptians continued as strong as ever. If the policy of Pharaoh had been directed to the same purpose as that which was afterward, under much less favorable circumstances, formed and pursued by the Moabites and Midianites, on all merely human principles of calculation we might have justly despaired for the religious integrity of God's elect people. If, instead of murderous coercion, they had aimed at amalgamation, and with this object had promoted friendly intercourse and matrimonial connections, the process of union might have been slow; but, unless prevented by the immediate interposition of God, it would have been certain. But when, instead of this conciliatory course, severe persecution and barbarous inflictions were continued for nearly half a century, the strongest barrier was raised against religious incorporation. There was little probability that the oppressed captive would copy the faith, or adopt the religious institutions, of his cruel tyrant. All history and experience are opposed to such a result.

These considerations appear to lead to the opinion, that the Israelites in Egypt, to a remarkable degree, preserved their manners and religion from being affected by those of the Egyptians. But before this conclusion is adopted, it will be necessary to inquire whether the sacred writers have cast any important light upon this subject. Joshua certainly alludes to it. When exhorting the people to obedience, he said, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye

the Lord." Joshua xxiv, 14. This text clearly states that the Israelites were to some extent guilty of idolatry whilst in Egypt; but it does not say whether the gods spoken of, as worshiped in that country, were the same gods which the Hebrew fathers served on the other side of the Euphrates, or the gods of Egypt. Another reference to this subject, couched in more precise terms, is found in Ezekiel. This prophet, expostulating with the elders of Israel, on account of the unfaithfulness of the people in every age of their history, observes, that, when the Lord brought them up out of the land of Egypt, he said unto them, "Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt." Ezek. xx, 7, 8. This language clearly proves, notwithstanding the apparent improbability of the thing, that the Israelites did to some extent pollute themselves with the idols of Egypt. But while this fact is fully admitted, it must be observed that the text affords important information respecting the nature of this evil, and the extent to which it prevailed. By placing in the same category the circumstances of the sojourn in Egypt, respecting which we have scarcely any information, and those which occurred in the wilderness, of which there remains an ample history, the prophet has enabled us to form a correct judgment on this subject. He says that when, after the exodus, they were commanded to cast away the idols of Egypt, they did not obey. Now it is well known, that, during the sojourn of the Israelites in the wilderness, idolatry was not only regarded as a sin against God, but every practice of the evil and incentive to it were punishable with death. Deut. xvii, 2-5. Yet this text assures us, that, notwithstanding this rigid prohibition, idolatry was practiced; and this fearful charge is fully confirmed by Moses himself, who declares that his people had provoked the Lord "to jealousy with strange gods," and these not the old deities of the Chaldeans, but "new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not." Deut. xxxii, 16, 17. But what was the real character of these idolatrous practices? It is certain that in the wilderness they did not obtain as corruptions of the national faith, nor did they deteriorate the institutions of the law by introducing new objects of worship, or new elements into the ritual. This idolatry must have existed as the private and covert sin of individuals, who acted in defiance of the religion of their fathers, and committed these abominations in secret, lest they should be punished for their iniquity.

Is it not reasonable to suppose that the sin of idolatry which was

committed in Egypt was of the same character? The practice is uniformly spoken of as that of individuals. This conclusion is strongly supported by the fact, that the distinguishing rite of their religion, circumcision, had been universally observed. Joshua v, 5. If these opinions are well founded, it will follow that the descendants of Jacob left Egypt, believing all the great doctrines of the patriarchal faith, and, as a people, devoted to the service of the true God; although there would be many among them irreligious and disobedient in their private character; and some who carried this sinful disposition to such an extent as privately to indulge in idolatrous practices.

These conclusions are confirmed by the nature of the contest which issued in the exodus of the Israelites. This is always spoken of as a war of religions; and such was the character of the whole process of their deliverance. The first demand of Moses for the liberation of his people was based upon the peculiar character of Hebrew worship: how could this have been, if it had to any considerable extent been assimilated to that of Egypt? On the contrary, the religious rites of the Hebrews are spoken of as so intolerable in the estimation of the Egyptians, that they could not be performed in their presence. *Exod. viii, 26.* Nor can the Scriptural narrative of the exodus be read without producing a conviction, that the Israelites in the depth of their trouble looked to God for support and deliverance. The language of Moses implies the sincerity, earnestness, and prevalence of their prayer: "The children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God." *Exod. ii, 23.* These words appear as intended to describe the most earnest application for help. And to whom did they cry but to Him who heard, and came down to deliver them? In the depth of their suffering, there can be little doubt that the children of Israel carefully studied the covenant promises, which had been made unto their fathers; and from these gathering reason to believe that the appointed time of their deliverance was near, they cried unto God in earnest and persevering prayer.

But this application for divine aid, recognized, as it appears to have been, by God as a national act, leads to other important inquiries respecting the religion of the Hebrews in Egypt. Had they any set place for uniting in worship? Did any class or order of persons exist among them in the character of priests or ministers of religion?

With respect to the first question, attention is instantly called to the altar of sacrifice. This, in those days, was the sacred place, the centre of worship. It appears to have been the invariable practice

of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, wherever they located for any length of time, to raise an altar unto the Lord: and, considering the peculiar circumstances which led the father of the twelve tribes to sojourn in the land of the Pharaohs, it would be singularly strange if, on reaching Goshen, he had not raised an altar, and offered sacrifice unto God. If this was done, it may be supposed, that, notwithstanding the wonderful multiplication of the people, that altar erected by their great ancestor still remained as a sacred place. But, from the words of Moses, it appears that sacrifice had been greatly in desuetude, if not entirely discontinued. The latter seems most probable, from the urgent importunity of Moses to take the people into the wilderness for this purpose.

It is, however, too much to infer, from this suspension of public sacrifice, that the Israelites at this time had no particular place which they regarded as, in a peculiar manner, sacred unto God. During the intercourse between Moses and Pharaoh, the former appears to have had access "unto the Lord" at any time when the exigency of the case required divine direction or power. The manner in which it is spoken of seems to prove that this intercourse did not merely arise out of the spiritual aspirations of Moses, but was, in some sense, connected with a certain place, a given locality, where he went to meet with God. Hence we read that "Moses returned unto the Lord;" Exod. v, 22; and, "Moses said before the Lord." Exod. vi, 30. While in the wilderness, before the tabernacle was built, or the Levitical economy revealed, Moses said unto the children of Israel, "Come near before the Lord." Exod. xvi, 9. Again: "Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up *before the Lord*, to be kept for your generations. So Aaron laid it up before the testimony, to be kept." Verses 33, 34. Do not these portions of Scripture plainly intimate the existence of a peculiar place, where the presence of God was supposed to reside, and where special access unto him was regarded as attainable?

But this fact is further illustrated by the intimations which are given of the existence of a priesthood, prior to the giving of the law. One explicit text places this point beyond all doubt. When Moses went up into the Mount to meet God, before the Aaronic priesthood had been instituted, and when the Israelites retained precisely the same ecclesiastical order as before the exodus, Jehovah said unto Moses, "And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them." Exodus xix, 22. Here, then, the priesthood is spoken of as an existing institution. (See Appendix, note 81.) But, not only so: another pas-

sage in the same chapter shows that the nature and privileges of this office were sufficiently known and understood, to make it the basis of a promise which was given to the whole people: "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests," verse 6; language which would have been utterly unintelligible, if the Israelites had not fully understood the free access unto God which priests were supposed to enjoy, and the acceptance with which their offerings were received.

These investigations appear to conduct us to the conclusion, that, during the rapid multiplication of the Hebrews in Egypt, the institutions of the patriarchal religion were expanded to meet the case of the multitude, and its spirit and purpose were developed, so as to provide one sacred place of access unto God, and appointed ministers, who there conducted sacred rites, and for themselves and for the people "came near unto the Lord." In what manner this place was prepared and these services performed in Egypt, we are not told; but it seems probable that a building was set apart for this special purpose. It is an established fact, that temples were built in Egypt, not only before the exodus, but even prior to the time of Joseph; it appears, therefore, reasonable to suppose, that the Israelites, with their strong inclination to maintain the patriarchal faith in all its fully developed maturity, would provide a seat for their sacred emblems, a place where, in a manner agreeable to the privileges of the primitive dispensation, they might have access unto God. This induction is almost invested with certainty by the sacred text, in which the Lord, speaking by Nathan to David, says, "I have not dwelt in any house, *from the day* that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle." 2 Sam. vii, 6. May not these words be taken, to imply, that a house which was regarded as the residence of God, existed among the Israelites in Egypt; and that, as, after the wanderings of the desert, and the unsettled government of the judges, the king of Judah proposed to build a house for the Lord, accounting it more suitable to his majesty than a tent, so Moses, finding among the Israelites a building consecrated to this sacred use, and perceiving the importance of providing a substitute for it during the long journey which the Hebrews had before them, removed the sacred emblems, and the seat of the Divine Presence, into a tent which he had prepared for the purpose? But if this is thought to be doubtful, it must be admitted that when the Israelites went forth thence into the wilderness, before they arrived at Sinai, or had received any revelations of the Levitical economy, there was a tent or tabernacle specially appropriated to the ministerial work of Moses, and where undoubtedly he had intercourse with God. Prior to the transgression of the

people in the case of the golden calf, this tabernacle stood in the camp, probably in the midst of it; but on that occasion Moses removed it out of the camp, (to the distance of two thousand cubits, according to the Talmud,) "and called it the tabernacle of the congregation." The narrative of the events which immediately followed this movement, clearly proves that it had been regarded as specially identified with the presence and service of God, and probably was consecrated to his worship. For when, on account of this great sin, the tabernacle was removed, it was evidently regarded as the withdrawal of the Lord from the people; and it is said, "It came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp." *Exod. xxxiii, 7.* By this spontaneous movement, the people declared their adherence to the service of Jehovah, and he honored their faith. For when Moses went out to the tabernacle, after its removal, and those who had been partakers in the sin "stood every man at his tent-door," and looking after Moses, wondered what would take place, "the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses." *Verses 8, 9.* It was in this tabernacle, doubtless, that the place or thing, called the "testimony," which was regarded as the seat of the Divine Presence, was situated.

However difficult it may be to give any distinct idea of this locality, of the elements of which it was composed, or of the manner of their arrangement, it can scarcely admit of a doubt that here were deposited visible emblems of patriarchal worship, which bore some resemblance or analogy to the ark and cherubim afterward prepared for the tabernacle of Moses. (See *Appendix*, note 32.)

This opinion harmonizes with what has been already advanced respecting the privileges and character of the patriarchal dispensation; (see *Patriarchal Age*, pp. 149-174, 247 :) and if these views be correct, we find, in the religious condition of the Hebrews at the exodus, the utmost development of patriarchism. With a retention of all the doctrines of that dispensation, they had among them religious ministers, and an appointed place, which was regarded as the special seat of the Divine Presence.

Having disposed of these preliminary inquiries, we proceed to investigate the divine revelations which were made to the Israelites in the wilderness. Here the first particular claiming attention is the manifestation of God which it exhibits, in revealing a Divine Person as its author and administrator. It is necessary in this case, also, to refer to the preceding dispensation. It has been shown (*Patriarchal Age*, p. 499) that the Divine Person who made revelations during the patriarchal age, frequently spoke and acted in a manner

which indicated a plurality of persons in the Divine Nature; and it was further shown, that this visible and acting Jehovah was the promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament.

It is equally interesting and important to observe a precisely similar mode of communication in the announcement of this new economy. When Moses saw the angel Jehovah in the burning bush at Sinai, this Divine Person declared himself "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:" a declaration which, of itself, is quite sufficient to point him out as the visible Jehovah of the patriarchs. And when the Israelites were delivered from Egypt, this same Divine Person was their guide; for "the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light." *Exod. xiii, 21.* This Angel of Jehovah is spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, as associated with another being, which is called the "Holy Spirit" of Jehovah: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and vexed *his Holy Spirit*: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them." *Isa. lxiii, 9, 10.*

From these statements the true and proper Divinity of this Angel of Jehovah cannot be doubted. But as he appeared to the patriarchs, so he did unto Moses; for he "spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." *Exod. xxxiii, 11; Deut. xxxiv, 10.* This language, be it observed, is spoken of Jehovah. And yet at other times, even in the same chapter, the Lord said unto Moses, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." Verse 20. How is this apparently contradictory language to be reconciled? Here is Jehovah seen face to face, and Jehovah that cannot be seen! Again: the Lord repeatedly says, that he will not go up with the people, but that he will send an Angel, *Exod. xxiii, 20-23; xxxiii, 1-3*; and yet we are told that "the Lord *alone* did lead them, and there was no strange God with them." *Deut. xxxii, 12.* For this Angel was also Jehovah. Here, then, as in patriarchal times, there is a visible Jehovah who is the Word of God, and who is generally the medium of divine communication with Moses; while at other times the narrative contains explicit references to the Father and the Holy Spirit. It is, therefore, certain that the Divine Person which appeared unto Moses was the same that visited Abraham and the other patriarchs; and thus the same Jehovah who revealed truth, administered judgment, and carried out the purposes of grace, throughout the patriarchal dispensation, was the Author of the Jewish economy, and, by his own immediate interposition,

built up the Levitical church with materials selected from the preceding dispensation.

In proceeding to furnish a digest of the revelations given from Sinai, it may be remarked that, besides those particulars which have been already noticed, many others will be observed to bear a striking analogy to similar elements of patriarchal religion, and, in some instances, to prominent features in the religious institutions of heathen nations. (See *Appendix*, note 33.) To some of these a passing reference will be made; but a full consideration of the latter class of coincidences will be reserved for a future place.*

The first divine revelation from Sinai, and that which alone was delivered immediately by God to all the people, comprised those great elements of moral law, commonly called the Decalogue. This has, by common consent, been regarded as the basis of the Jewish religion. And it is worthy of particular observation, that it undoubtedly re-enacts some laws which were in full force under the patriarchal dispensation. It is certain that murder was not only prohibited, but punishable with death, under that economy: it is equally clear that idolatry was forbidden, Job xxxi, 2; so was adultery, and the penalty was death. Gen. xxvi, 9-11. It has been already shown (*Patriarchal Age*, pp. 255-257) that the same might be said of several other of these commandments; so that in this case there is a certain incorporation of the elements of primitive faith and law into the very foundation of the Mosaic economy. Hence Dr. Hales does not hesitate to say, "There is great reason to believe that the substance, at least, of the Decalogue given on Mount Sinai, was of primitive institution."—*Mant's Bible*, Job xxiii, 11, 12.

As might have been expected from the important character of these laws, their language and arrangement have been closely scrutinized. The principal question, however, which has been raised, respects the division and arrangement of these commandments. It is undisputed that, after having been orally delivered, they were written, and written upon two tables of stone. How, then, were they divided? and how many stood on each table? On these questions very conflicting opinions have been held; but that which was adopted by the English Church at the Reformation, by which four laws are placed on the first, and six upon the second table, is undoubtedly supported by the highest authority, and is entitled to universal acceptance. (See *Appendix*, note 34.)

As no nation ever had a purer moral code for the regulation of

* The third volume of *Sacred Annals*, treating of the History and Religion of the Gentile Nations.

private life, and as the basis of their public institutions ; so no people ever received the elements of their laws in a manner so impressive, or accompanied with such solemn sanctions. In respect of elevated theology and moral purity, a comparison of the Decalogue with any laws of human device is out of the question. And as to the manner of communication, and the authority with which they were propounded, how puerile and contemptible do the pretensions of Numa, the trick of Solon, the fables of Minos and Lycurgus, appear, when placed in juxtaposition with the thunders of Sinai, the flaming mount, and God speaking to millions of people out of the midst of the fire !

It is not easy, perhaps it is impossible, at the present time, to form any tolerable estimate of the effect which the miraculous enunciation of this law by God himself produced upon the congregation of Israel. That the loftiest intellect was filled with awe, and the stoutest heart quailed under these sublime manifestations of Deity, is certain ; nor can we form a conception of any circumstances more likely to bring divine authority, with all its just influence, to bear on the human conscience, than those which took place on that occasion.

The revelation of the ceremonial law succeeded the communication of the moral code, as a part of the same system, and under the same sanction. The tabernacle with its furniture here first claims attention. This sacred tent was intended to be the centre of worship, the seat of the Divine Presence. In the directions given for the construction of this sanctuary, there are two things to be particularly noted. It was to be made "after the pattern of the tabernacle," *Exod. xxv, 9* ; words which appear to convey a distinct intimation that a pre-existent tabernacle was to afford a general outline of this new building, and of its furniture. But the Mosaic tabernacle was not to be a mere reproduction, or servile imitation, of the sacred tent previously in use : it was to be a copy, but elaborated and more splendid ; and, at the same time, more perfect in its typical character as a "shadow of heavenly things." *Heb. viii, 5*. Therefore Moses is further charged not only with a detailed description of every part of the new tabernacle, and of every article of its furniture, but a visible representation of the whole was exhibited to him by the Lord on Sinai, and the solemn injunction was repeatedly given : "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount." *Exod. xxv, 40 ; xxvi, 30 ; Num. viii, 4*. (See *Appendix*, note 35.)

Notwithstanding the careful particularity with which Moses appears to have described the tabernacle, it is doubtful whether we possess sufficient information to give us a clear apprehension of the

construction of this interesting and important edifice. Enough has, however, been revealed to enable us to form a general idea of it.

The first part to be described is the court of the tabernacle. This was merely an inclosed, uncovered space, about one hundred and seventy-five feet long, and eighty-seven and a half feet wide. It was formed by fine linen curtains, suspended on pillars, of which there were twenty on each side, ten on the west end, and six on the east, where was the entrance. All these pillars stood in sockets of brass, which were laid on the ground. In addition to the support which the pillars derived from the sockets, their tops were fastened with cords, both on the inside and outside, to pins driven into the ground. This place was therefore simply an inclosure, and contained the brazen altar, the laver, and the tabernacle.

The first of these was emphatically the Jewish altar. To this every animal sacrifice was brought, and offered according to the manner prescribed in the law. Besides these regular sacrifices, by a special law, (Lev. xvii, 3, 4,) every animal slain for food was killed at the door of the tabernacle, and a part of it presented as an offering to the Lord. Although animal food might have been used very sparingly by the Israelites in the wilderness, yet, when the vast number of the people is considered, it will be evident that the operation of this law would bring a great number of victims daily to the altar. But, in addition to all these occasional offerings, the morning and evening sacrifice were offered upon it every day.

The laver stood inside the brazen altar, between it and the tabernacle. It was designed to contain water, which appears to have been used for the double purpose of cleansing the sacrifices and washing the priests. Moses did not write any precise description of the form or size of this laver, but simply states that it was made of the metallic mirrors which were given by the Israelitish women for this purpose. Their conduct on this occasion was as consistent as devoted: they first presented their ornaments to the service of the sanctuary, and then, having little occasion for mirrors, gave them to make this laver.*

But the tabernacle was the most important part of this sacred place. Every portion of it was made according to special directions given by God, and was full of significance. It was a building of wood framed together, hung inside with embroidered curtains, and covered on the outside with the skins of animals. The whole edifice was thirty cubits long, ten cubits wide, and ten cubits high; or

* Our authorized translation of this text (Exod. xxxviii, 8) is most unfortunate, "looking-glasses" being inserted instead of "mirrors." A laver of brass made of looking-glasses!

about fifty-two and a half feet long, seventeen and a half feet wide, and seventeen and a half feet high. It was divided by a transverse partition, or veil, into two unequal parts: the outer and larger room, called "the holy place," was thirty-five feet long; and the inner room, named "the most holy place," or "the holy of holies," was seventeen and a half feet square.

As this building was adapted to frequent removal, its foundation was similar in design to that of the pillars of the court, only the sockets here were made of silver, and composed of the metal contributed by the Israelites as ransom-money. Each socket weighed one hundred and fourteen pounds of pure silver; and of these there were one hundred. Into these sockets perpendicular pieces of wood were fastened, each of them being a cubit and a half in breadth: they were made of acacia-wood, and were covered with gold. These, as they stood in their sockets, were joined closely together at the edges, and fastened by rings at the top, and thus formed the substantial frame-work of the building. Over the whole of this, externally, was drawn the covering of beautiful needle-work, richly embroidered: this served as the ceiling of the holy places, and fell down outside the wooden frame-work. Over this were laid, in succession, coverings of goats' hair, a covering made of rams' skins, and another of badgers' skins; and thus the whole sanctuary was secured. The veil which divided the two sanctuaries, and the curtain which covered the entrance, and was lifted up to afford ingress and egress, (for there was *no door*,) were all precisely of the same kind with the first covering,—a beautiful embroidery. The inner part of the sanctuary was also hung with embroidered curtains precisely similar. It is not necessary to enlarge on some difficulties which are found in the Mosaic details: the preceding description will be sufficient to convey a general idea of the tabernacle.

This sacred structure was intended to serve important religious purposes. For this end, the requisite provision was made. In the outer sanctuary was placed the golden altar of incense; on this altar fragrant perfume, specially prepared for the purpose, was burned every morning and evening. Inside the altar, on the right hand, stood the golden table of show-bread; on the left, the golden candlestick or lamp. The first of these is very particularly described. *Exod. xxv, 23–30*. For this table were prepared golden dishes, bowls, spoons, and covers, and also crowns of gold. The provision for this table was also carefully specified. *Lev. xxiv, 5–9*. Twelve cakes, corresponding to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel, made of fine flour, were to be kept constantly on this table. These, which were renewed from time to time, were strewed with frankin-

cense. The golden candlestick was made of pure gold, and weighed one talent, or about one hundred and fourteen pounds. The narrative contains no statement of its size; and the description of its form has been so variously interpreted, that no certainty can be attained. It appears most probable, from Exod. xxv, 31, that a large and highly ornamented stem rose from a broad and solid base: this stem is supposed to have been carried up to the full height, bearing the centre light, having three branches, bearing lights on each side; thus making, in the whole, seven lights. Calmet has conjectured that these branches were so constructed, that they might be made to revolve around the central stem. The lights were oil lamps, kept continually burning over against the table of show-bread. It will have been observed that there was no window or aperture to admit external light in the sides or covering of the tabernacle; the lamps were therefore not only necessary as a part of the religious symbols of this sacred place, of which these articles constituted the furniture, but were also intended to give light to the building.

Within the veil, the principal objects were the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat. The description of these is full and precise, with one remarkable exception,—it does not contain any account of the form of the cherubim; a fact which seems to intimate that these figures were well known to Moses and to the people. (See *Appendix*, note 36.) The ark was an oblong chest, made of wood, and overlaid with gold. Its length was about four feet five inches; its height, about two feet eight inches; and its breadth the same as its height. The upper part of the lid of this ark was the mercy-seat, which was made of solid gold. The two cherubim stood above the ark, and were of the same substance with the gold of the mercy-seat, one on each end; their faces were turned toward each other, and their wings expanded, overshadowing the mercy-seat. Above these cherubim was the shekinah, which stood over and between them; and thus they, by their intervening wings, overshadowed the mercy-seat.

The wide range of Jewish theology does not present to our inquiry a subject fraught with deeper interest than the true character and religious import of these sacred things,—the shekinah, the cherubim, and the ark. The first does not appear to present any serious difficulty, since it is explicitly spoken of as the Divine Presence. (See *Appendix*, note 37.) It was evidently intended to make a visible display of the presence and glory of Jehovah: it was no created angel, or representation of angels, but the glory of the eternal God. This is, in effect, declared by the term, and is abundantly proved by the language of Holy Scripture respecting it: "The Lord spake

unto Moses, saying, Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." Exod. xxv, 1, 8.

When the work was finished, and the tabernacle was set up, we are told, "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle." Exod. xl, 34, 35. Upon this an eminent author observes, "This was a proper appearance of JEHOVAH, or of the *Shekinah*; for it was an appearance when all things, according to God's directions, were prepared for his reception into the tabernacle, when he entered and took possession of it as his habitation, the seat of his shekinah, and gracious presence among the children of Israel. By the description of Moses, it should seem that the cloud of glory was both within and without the tabernacle. For the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. The glory of Jehovah, which entered into the tabernacle, is a proof that the person then appearing was the God of Israel, the proper object of that whole religious service and worship which was directed to be offered at the tabernacle; that he was the God of Israel, who dwelt on the mercy-seat, over the ark of covenant or testimony; he was the person whom the Israelites owned as their God and King; the only object of their religious worship."—*Lowman on the Shekinah*, pp. 134–137. And to this may be added the important consideration, that this visible and glorious Jehovah, who was manifested in the shekinah, was the Second Person in the Trinity, the promised Saviour.

This visible residence of God in his appointed tabernacle, among his people, answered many important purposes. It gave them, through his appointed ministers, a way of immediate access unto God. "There," said the Lord unto Moses, "I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims." Exod. xxv, 22. Here Jehovah, God of hosts, gave audience to his redeemed people, afforded them consolation in trouble, and pointed out to them the way of deliverance when they were in danger. This visible manifestation of the Divine Presence in the Hebrew sanctuary, was further adapted to uphold the knowledge and worship of the true God in the world, and to rebuke the proud and vain pretensions of idolatry. At that time most of the nations had fearfully corrupted the doctrines and practices of the patriarchal faith. Their speculations on the Divine Nature had issued either in their regarding the Supreme as an elevated abstraction, too far removed from mundane affairs to exercise any active interposition amongst men; or else as a mere local

divinity, personified by an idol, respecting whose nature, potency, and real character, various opinions, more or less gross and foolish, prevailed. The visible presence of God with Israel was intended to expose this error, and save them from this fatal delusion. Did Gentile nations boast of the presence of gods among them, although these were made by men's hands out of lifeless matter, or were but brute beasts raised by an absurd caprice to this unnatural elevation? Israel exulted in the real presence of Him who is indeed the God of the whole earth. Did others make great efforts to erect systems of religion which derived all their power from human policy, pride, and wealth? Israel was taught of God. He took all the old elements of pre-existent religion, and, remodeling the whole according to his own will, and investing them all with new and divine authority, he gave a system of religion to his people which, however wonderful in other respects, was chiefly so on this account,—that it was communicated and administered by himself.

In another important respect did this Divine Presence, in connection with the ark, the mercy-seat, and the cherubim, subserve the purposes of grace: it exhibited in this relation a remarkable outline of the great scheme of redemption. If it be objected to this opinion, that the typical character of these holy things would not be understood by the Jews of this period; and that, therefore, however illustrative of religious doctrines they may now be to us, they were not then so to them; it may be observed, that it does not follow, because the Hebrew in the wilderness could not apprehend all the typical allusion and doctrinal significance which were couched under these emblems, that therefore they could know nothing of their religious import. On the contrary, it appears certain that this holy sanctuary and its sacred services were intended and designed, not only to afford the means of worship according to the ritual of the law, but also to impress on the mind of the people the evil of sin, its terrible consequences in alienating man from God, the necessity and efficacy of vicarious sacrifice, pardon through atonement, and the blessed results of access unto God. Heb. ix, 9. These great subjects were not formally propounded in theory, but were exhibited with so much distinctness, that men would apprehend the force and intelligibility of the mode of instruction, in proportion as they were obedient to the truth.

But the tabernacle, with all its glory and beauty, the throne and the temple of Jehovah, created and exhibited the necessity for the institution of a suitable priesthood. The size of this tent not only precluded the possibility of any tolerable number of the people meeting there for worship; the division and arrangements of this sanctuary, and, indeed, the whole scope of the economy, showed that,

as a system, it was not designed to offer to the people individually immediate and formal access to the Divine Presence. On the contrary, by the ritual institutions of this economy, the Holy Ghost distinctly signified "that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." Heb. ix, 8. And, therefore, the law "was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator," (Gal. iii, 19,) who, as the representative of the people, was on their behalf to approach God; and, as the representative of God, was commissioned to declare his will, and announce his grace to the people.

It has been already shown that priestly acts had been performed from the time of the fall, and that, prior to the exodus, certain persons had been selected to sustain this office. The priesthood may, therefore, in some sense, be regarded as a patriarchal institution, which, with other elements of the primitive religion, had been incorporated into the Levitical economy. But it must not be inferred from this, that the office was the same. In other instances, the portions of primitive religion transferred to the Jewish were raised, enlarged, and invested with higher dignity and authority than before. This was the case, also, in reference to the priesthood. (See *Appendix*, note 38.)

The first intimation of the appointment of the house of Aaron to the sacerdotal office, is found in a simple statement of the fact. Exod. xxviii, 1. This is followed by copious directions for the preparation of priestly vestments. These directions were given when Moses was on the Mount with God the first time. The tabernacle having been erected, and every necessary preparation made, this purpose was carried into effect. Exod. xxix; Lev. viii, ix. Aaron and his four sons are first named as set apart for this office: "Take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons." Exod. xxviii, 1. The manner in which these persons were set apart for this high office is minutely detailed. The ceremony is performed with suitable solemnity. The whole congregation is assembled at the door of the tabernacle, the holy anointing oil is produced, a bullock and two rams prepared for sacrifice, and Aaron and his sons are washed with pure water. He is then first arrayed in the garments prepared for the high priest, and afterward they are habited in the attire of ordinary priests. All are then anointed with oil, touched with the sacrificial blood, and commanded to remain within the tabernacle seven days. After the expiration of this term, on the eighth day other sacrifices are commanded to

be offered ; on which occasion a fire issued forth from the shekinah, and consumed the offering. This kindled a fire which was ever after kept alive on the altar.

For the high priest there was prepared, besides the garments common to the other priests, a dress especially designated as "for glory and for beauty." Exod. xxviii, 2. This was a robe of deep blue color, made out of one piece of material, by cutting a hole for the head to pass through, one half falling down before, and the other behind, and joined together at the sides, leaving room for the arms. Around the bottom of this robe was a deep rich fringe, ornamented with pomegranates and small bells. There was also a fringe around the neck. Besides this robe, the high priest wore an ephod and girdle. The ephod was also a very gorgeous vestment. It was made "of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work." Verse 6. The girdle was formed of the same kind of materials, and made in a similar manner. The whole was very richly embroidered. On each shoulder was placed a large precious stone set in gold, each having engraved on it, after the manner of a signet, the names of six tribes of Israel. A striking similarity is observable between the fabric of the ephod, and of the vail and curtains of the tabernacle. The high priest wore on his head a golden crown or mitre. The head-dress appears to have been made of linen, ornamented with blue lace, to which was fastened a gold plate, emphatically termed the crown ; on this were engraven the words, קדש-ל-יהוה, "Holiness to the Lord." Attached to the ephod was the breast-plate : it was made of the same materials, but covered with gold, in which twelve several precious stones were set, in three perpendicular rows, four in each row ; and on each of these was engraved the name of one of the tribes of Israel.

It is scarcely possible to conceive of a more splendid and gorgeous dress than this. As a proof of the existence of superior art, an evidence of civilization, it bears decided testimony as to the elevation of the Israelites. But as a sacerdotal vestment, its glowing colors, costly materials, exquisite workmanship, all united to produce an effect at once glorious and impressive.

Besides this rich attire, there is another element, which held an important rank in the investiture of the high priest. It was composed of "the URIM AND THUMMIM," and was to be put into, or upon, the breastplate. Although this addition was of the utmost consequence, it is now involved in the deepest and most perplexing obscurity. Writers of the greatest learning have devoted the highest talent, combined with the most patient and untiring industry, to the investigation of this subject ; yet the result has only been to

place before us a variety of conflicting opinions, from which, however difficult it may be to decide between the opposing theories of great men, the following points appear to be sufficiently established. (See *Appendix*, note 39.)

1. Whatever was designated by the terms "Urim and Thummim," existed, and was known, prior to the revelations of Sinai. These names might have been new, or in some measure altered; but the thing itself was known before the time of Moses. This is clear, from the manner in which it is first mentioned, as well as from the evidence of its previous use. The terms first occur in the command given to Moses: "Thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually." *Exod.* xxviii, 30. From this manner of expression it is plain that Moses is not now giving directions for making some new thing, or for applying to a hitherto unknown purpose something which previously existed. He speaks as if the thing itself, and its object or use, were well known, and simply enjoins a steady attention to it. The object or use of Urim and Thummim was to afford a means of obtaining counsel or direction immediately from God. Hence, when Joshua was appointed to succeed Moses, and was promised, for his encouragement, the fullest measure of divine aid and direction, the most important part of the promise was given in these words: "He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord." *Num.* xxvii, 21. And when Saul had sinned, the most fearful consequences of his rejection were, that when he "inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, *nor by Urim*, nor by prophets." *1 Sam.* xxviii, 6. But then it is very certain that the patriarchal religion afforded its worshipers a means of asking direct counsel of Heaven, which procured clear and explicit verbal communications of the divine will. The case of Rebekah is a remarkable instance of this kind. In her distress, "she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her," &c. *Gen.* xxv, 22, 23. The seat of this oracle may be unknown, the mode of application disputed, and the manner in which the answer was given uncertain; yet, notwithstanding all this, the fact remains a standing proof that the patriarchal faith, on extraordinary occasions, afforded individuals special access unto God. It is also worthy of observation, that the ancient idolatry of Egypt appears to countenance the opinion that the Hebrew Urim bore some resemblance to a patriarchal institution.

2. It further appears certain that the Urim and Thummim held no subordinate rank in the religious and national privileges of the Israelites. Hence, when Moses pronounced his memorable blessing upon the several tribes, speaking of Levi, he said, "Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy Holy One." Deut. xxxiii, 8. This was indeed the chief glory of the nation, that the shekinah was their holy oracle, and offered them through the Urim a means of asking counsel of God.

3. Again: the answers obtained by this means were clear and full, and delivered in an audible voice. In none of the cases recorded in the Scripture do we find any of the ambiguity, or double meaning, which characterized most of the oracular responses of the heathen. It was probably on account of this perfect explicitness of the answers, that the terms under consideration, implying "light and perfection," were given to this mode of obtaining divine counsel. It will, however, in all probability, considering the conflicting opinions which have been advocated on this point, be regarded as rash to follow Prideaux in an unhesitating assertion, that these answers were given in an audible voice. But the reasons for his conclusion are irresistible. The whole scope of the subject justifies this opinion. It is undoubted, that God in this manner communicated his will to Moses. He "spake" unto him. He "talked" with him. Hence generally, in the scriptural record of the prayers of Moses, the answer is announced by the terms, "*The Lord said.*" And when, in the important affair of the Gibeonites, the people neglected to inquire of the Lord, they are blamed for not having asked counsel "*at the mouth of the Lord.*" Joshua ix, 14. For the same reason the place where the ark and the mercy-seat stood is repeatedly called "*the oracle.*" Psalm xxviii, 2, &c. The manner in which these oracular answers were obtained has been supposed to be this: The high-priest, in his robes, and with his breast-plate, entered the holy place, and, standing without the veil, his face turned toward the mercy-seat, propounded the inquiry, which was answered by an audible voice from the mercy-seat in the holy of holies.

But the question may still be pressed, "Wherein did this great privilege or virtue consist? What were the Urim and Thummim?" These questions have never yet obtained a full and satisfactory answer. Lewis has given a judgment which appears to come nearer to a solution of the difficulty than any other that has come under our notice. He says, "It seems safest to hold, that the words, 'Urim and Thummim,' signify only a divine virtue and power given to the breast-plate of the high-priest in its consecration, by which an oracular answer was obtained from God, when he was consulted

by the high priest with it on, in the manner He directed: and this was called Urim and Thummim, to express the clearness and perfection which these oracular answers carried with them." *Hebrew Republic*, vol. i, p. 127. If a conjecture in addition to, or as an emendation of, this opinion be admissible, we should say, a careful review of the whole subject has convinced us that, in patriarchal times, there were certain consecrated things by means of which pious worshipers could obtain oracular answers in their application to God; and that the instance before us exhibits the divine appointment of the breast-plate of the high-priest to be invested with this virtue, and to afford the Hebrews, through the instrumentality of their ecclesiastical head, this high privilege.

It will now be necessary to direct attention to the principal religious services of this economy. We refer, first, to those connected with *the great Day of Atonement* or expiation. On every other occasion, the sons of Aaron appear to have been associated with him in the duties and honors of the high priesthood. But here a strict limitation is distinctly marked: the command is, "And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he cometh out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel." Lev. xvi, 17. This important service was always held on the tenth day of the seventh month, (*Tishri*), and was called יוֹם כִּפּוּר "day of pardon," (Lev. xxiii, 27,) and in the Talmud, תַּעֲבִירַת גְּדוּל "great fasting," it being the only fast for an entire day which Moses enjoined. On this occasion the high priest, having washed himself, put on his linen robes, and placing his sacerdotal mitre on his head, first offered a bullock and a lamb for his own sins and those of the priests. He then received from the princes of the people two goats for a sin-offering; one of which was selected by lot to be sacrificed to God, the other was permitted to escape into the wilderness. Having finished these sacrifices, the high priest filled a censer with burning coals from the altar, and, putting two handfuls of incense into a vase, took them into the most holy place, where he poured the incense on the fire, and, leaving the censer, perfuming the sanctuary and enveloping the propitiatory and the cherubim in its smoke, he returned, took the blood of the bullock and the goat, and went again into the most holy place. With his finger he first sprinkled the blood of the bullock, and afterwards that of the goat, upon the lid of the ark of the covenant, and seven times he also sprinkled it upon the floor before the ark. After his return into the outer sanctuary, he put the blood on the horns of the golden altar, and sprinkled it

seven times over the surface of the altar. This was done as an expiation for the uncleanness and the sins of the children of Israel. Lev. xvi, 11-19. The high priest then, going out into the court of the tabernacle, placed both hands, with great solemnity, on the head of the scape-goat; a symbolic representation that the animal was loaded with the sins of the people. It was then delivered to the man who led it away into the wilderness, and let it go free, to signify the liberation of the Israelites from the punishment due to their sins; while the goat that was slain, and the bullock which had been sacrificed, were burned whole beyond the limits of the camp, to signify the guilt of the people, and the punishment which they merited.

At length the high priest, putting off his white vestments, and assuming the robes of beauty and glory, sacrificed a holocaust for himself and the people, and offered another sin-offering. Lev. xvi, 23-25; Num. xxix, 7-11. He then went forth to the people, read some sentences out of the law, and afterward, with outstretched arms, pronounced the threefold blessing:—"May Jehovah bless thee and preserve thee! May Jehovah cause his faces to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee! May Jehovah lift up his faces upon thee, and may he put prosperity unto thee!"*

It is important to observe the religious truth which these services indicated, and the religious effect which they were calculated to produce on the minds of the people.

The services of this day developed, beyond all reasonable doubt, that great principle of the scheme of redemption, the pardon of sin through vicarious sacrifice. It is no valid objection to this doctrine, that the atonement was not made by the death of the animal, but by the sprinkling of the blood afterward by the priest.—*Apology of Ben Mordecai*, p. 797. For it was clearly as necessary that the sacrifice should be presented to God, as that the life of the victim should be taken. And "for what purpose can we suppose the blood to have been carried into the most sacred part of the divine residence, and that on the day of atonement, except to obtain the favor of Him in whose presence it was sprinkled?"—*Outram De Sacrificiis*, d. i, c. xix, sect. 3. In fact, the manner in which this atonement was made shows how fully the wisdom of God is here displayed. It was necessary that vicarious suffering should be exhibited; the animal is therefore slain. It was equally necessary that this forfeited life should be presented to God; the blood is therefore carried into the sanctuary. And, as if to rebut the objection referred to, on a question of fact, the blood must be *sprinkled*; which

* Dr. Adam Clarke's translation. See also Calmet's Dictionary, art. *Expiation*; Jahn's *Archæologia*, art. 356; and Jennings's *Antiquities*, p. 510.

could not be done unless still reeking with the life of the creature. If the animal was quite dead, and the blood coagulated, it was unfit for sacrificial purposes: it must be "the blood of sprinkling." Lest this important point should be overlooked, the people were told, "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Lev. xvii, 11.

Besides the practical inculcation of this momentous truth, the services of this day were calculated to produce a deep religious impression on the minds of the people. While dressed in his linen garments, and making an atonement for sin, by taking the blood of sacrifice into the most holy place, the high priest represented the people, and in this character performed these offices. Having finished them, he laid aside his sacrificial garments, and, putting on his robes of beauty and glory, changed his representative character, and appeared as the minister of God, and, as such, pronounced a three-fold blessing upon the people. When on this occasion he went into the holy place, the serious and considerate part of the people felt that the great question was, whether God would accept the atonement, or punish their sin in the person of their representative. That this was the view taken of the subject by the early Jews, is proved by their statement, that "he had never seen sorrow that had not seen Israel during the absence of the high priest, and he had never seen joy that had not seen Israel when the high priest came forth to bless:" language which clearly shows how deeply they felt the question at issue,—whether God would indeed receive the atonement and send them a blessing.

Five days after the day of expiation, the *feast of tabernacles* began, and continued eight days; the first and last of which were regarded as the most important. This feast was instituted mainly for the purpose of preserving a perpetual memorial of the journey of the Israelites through the Arabian Wilderness. But it was also regarded as a festival of thanks for the vintage and the gathering in of the fruits, and was therefore sometimes called "the feast of ingathering." Lev. xxiii, 34–44. Its observance was commanded in these words:—"Ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm-trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook. Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land; that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." This festival was therefore commemorative of the Divine Goodness in protecting and providing for the Israel-

ites while journeying in the desert, as well as expressive of gratitude for the rich supply of the fruits of the earth from year to year. It was thus calculated to awaken and cultivate pious and grateful feelings in the Jewish people throughout their successive generations. Every adult male Israelite was required to appear before the Lord, and take part in these services. This feast was a season of universal joy, and was shared by the people at large.

The *Pentecost* was another feast of the first class, at which every adult male Jew was required to present himself before the Lord. It was a festival of thanks for the harvest, and commemorative of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. It was therefore held fifty days after the passover. Lev. xxiii, 15, 16. The Hebrews called it "the feast of weeks," because it was held seven weeks after the passover; but when the Greek language became prevalent, it was termed "*Pentecost*," the word meaning the "fiftieth day." On this occasion the first-fruits of the wheat-harvest were offered. Deut. xvi, 9-11. These first-fruits consisted of two loaves of unleavened bread, each made of about three pints of meal. Lev. xxiii, 16, 17. Besides these, there were to be offered with the bread "seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt-offering unto the Lord. Then shall ye sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace-offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits for a wave-offering before the Lord, with the two lambs." Lev. xxiii, 18-20.

The *Passover*, the institution of which has been already given, was also one of the great Jewish festivals, at which every adult male was required to be present before the Lord. This had its origin in the wonderful deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, and especially in their exemption from the destruction of the first-born which visited all the other families of that land. It was specially remarkable for the absence of all kinds of leavened or fermented food; and, to enforce this, no leaven was to remain in any house of the Israelites during the whole eight days of the feast. But the distinguishing feature of the passover was the sacrifice of the paschal lamb; the blood of which, being sprinkled on the door-posts, and lintels of the doors, preserved the people at its institution from the ravages of the destroying angel; afterward, at every annual celebration, it was sprinkled at the foot of the altar. Christians can scarcely consider the nature and institution of this feast without regarding the paschal lamb as eminently typical of Christ and his atonement. It is, however, another and a very interesting inquiry, whether the ancient Jews had any such ideas. On this point the following opin-

ions of a learned writer deserve attention :—" That the ancient Jews understood this institution to prefigure the sufferings of Christ, is evident, not only from the New Testament, but from the Mishna, where, among the five things said to be contained in the *great Hallel*, (a hymn composed of several psalms, and sung after the paschal supper,) one is the sufferings of Messiah, for which they refer to Psalm cxvi."—*Kitto's Cyclop. Bib. Lit.* This feast commenced on the fourteenth day of the month Abib, and was so rigidly enforced, that it has been supposed (on the authority of Numbers ix, 13) that every person willfully neglecting its observance was condemned to death. On the day after the Sabbath, on the feast of passover, a sheaf of the first-fruits of the barley-harvest was to be brought to the priest to be waved before the Lord, accompanied by a burnt-offering. Till this sheaf was presented, neither bread nor parched corn, nor full ripe ears of the harvest, could be eaten.

Besides these, there were other religious institutions divinely appointed to the Hebrews, which may be briefly noticed.

The *feast of trumpets* was held on the first day of the seventh month of the sacred year, and was, in fact, an ushering in of the civil year with the sound of trumpets. Num. xxix; Lev. xxiii, 2, 3. This day was kept sacred; all servile business was forbidden, and a solemn sacrifice offered in the name of the whole nation. The appointed oblations on this occasion were a calf, two rams, and seven lambs of the same year, with offerings of flour and wine.

The *new moons*.—A peculiar reverence was entertained for the beginning of each month, and Moses prescribed special sacrifices for the occasion. Num. xxviii, 11, 12. But we have no evidence that it was intended, or commanded to be held, as a holy day.

The *sabbatical year* and the *jubilee* deserve notice, although their institution was more of a civil than of a religious character; but as these could only be fully acted upon after the occupation of the promised land, further reference to their object may be suitably deferred.

Before closing this sketch of these institutions, it will be necessary to mention the *Sabbath* itself. An opinion has been already expressed, that this was from the beginning held sacred by a primitive and patriarchal law. But, however this may be, its enactment, or re-enactment, as a special and very important part of the Jewish economy, is certain; and may be regarded under two aspects. It enjoined entire cessation from all labor. This is not only seen in the command itself; but the Scriptures afford very many and striking illustrations of the true meaning and extent of these prohibitions. Kindling a fire for domestic purposes was prohibited, Exod. xxxv, 3; so was preparing food. Exod. xvi, 23. A case in which a man was

found gathering sticks on the Sabbath-day was submitted immediately to the Divine judgment, and the Lord doomed the offender to death by stoning. Num. xv, 35. Buying and selling were also forbidden. Neh. x, 31.

But the Sabbath was intended not only to afford rest from labor and secular enjoyments: it was also to be a day devoted to holy religious exercises. This is clearly stated in the law as the great object, and *rest* as a means to this end. It was to be kept *holy*. Hence it is said that the Sabbath was appointed "for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." Exod. xxxi, 16, 17. It is therefore enforced as immediately associated with religious exercises. Lev. xix, 30; Ezek. xlv, 17; Isa. i, 13; lxvi, 23. All these passages very clearly show that the Sabbath was designed for special religious purposes; and while it stood out prominently as a sign of the covenant, it offered to men the means of realizing a personal interest in all its blessings.

The most important of the Mosaic institutions have now passed under consideration. Many other regulations respecting sacrifices, ablutions, rites, and other observances, were given, which it has not been thought necessary to detail. Other commands have also been omitted, because, being partly religious and partly secular in their object, we shall refer to them generally in our future exposition of the history and religion of this people. (See *Appendix*, note 40.)

It is, however, desirable that a clear apprehension of the true character of the religious system revealed to Moses should be obtained; and then, regarding this as superadded to or built upon the substratum of patriarchal theology, to form a just and general opinion of the religion of the Hebrew people at the close of their wanderings in the desert.

First, then, this religious economy, unlike that which preceded and that which followed it, was national and theocratic. It was prepared for and adapted to the Jewish people. It is true that it allowed individuals from other tribes or nations to become proselytes to this faith. But even then they were regarded as, at least religiously, merged into the Israelitish family, and thus to have become heirs of the promises made unto the seed of Abraham. This is evident from the terms in which the divine promises and predictions were conveyed, and also from the manner in which they were actually fulfilled. The promise first limited the blessings of this covenant in general terms to the seed of Abraham. Afterward there is a further limitation to Isaac, and, subsequently, the privileges to be conferred are strictly confined to the descendants of Jacob. All this clearly showed the intended nationality of the system. The manner in which

these promises were carried into effect still more clearly proves the point.

When God at Sinai began the revelation of the law, he avowed his purpose, that "if they would obey his voice indeed, and keep his covenant, then they should be a peculiar treasure to him above all people." *Exod. xix, 5*. This made an open and well-known separation of the Israelites necessary. And hence Moses, when alluding to the public evidence that he and his people had found grace in the sight of God, asks, "Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be *separated*, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." *Exod. xxxiii, 16*. The entire economy of this religion was adapted to create and sustain this national separation. The located residence of Deity in the sanctuary, the appointed place of sacrifice; the injunction that at least thrice in the year all adult males should in this place appear before the Lord; the limitation of the priesthood to the family of Aaron, and of the service of the house of God to the tribe of Levi, with various other parts of the system; all clearly contributed to this end.

But the most important element in this consideration is the fact, that this national religious separation was effected by the establishment of a theocracy. The opinions entertained by the later Jews on this point may be gathered from Josephus. He says, "Among the several nations of the world, some have chosen monarchical government, others democratical, or the government of the people; but our legislator established a form of government different from all others, which is a theocracy, if I may be allowed so to call it, which assigns the whole power to God, with the management of all natural affairs; inspiring us with the maxim that God sees everything, and is the cause of all good that happens to us."—*Contra Apionem*, lib. ii, sect. 16. It will be observed here, that Josephus, like many modern writers, attributes the selection of this peculiar kind of government to the policy of Moses, rather than to the appointment of Jehovah; overlooking the important distinction that Moses did not first choose God as the governor of the people, but that God elected them to be his.

The formal establishment of this covenant is thus detailed by divine command: "Tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before

their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord." Exod. xix, 3-8. In accordance with this covenant, the religion of Israel was inseparably blended with their civil government; and God was henceforth not only the object of their adoration and worship, but also their supreme temporal Governor or King.

The fact of this theocracy being admitted, it becomes necessary to ascertain its object, manner of administration, and the nature and extent of the sanctions by which it was sustained.

The object of this arrangement was principally to maintain in the world a clear and permanent testimony to the doctrine of the unity of the Divine Nature. At this time polytheism had to some extent affected the religious system of every other people; nor were the Israelites quite free from the taint of idolatry. The religious state of mankind, therefore, demanded that some extraordinary means should be adopted to preserve the true doctrine of the Divine Nature uncorrupted in the world. The measure which Infinite Wisdom devised for this purpose, and also to contribute towards the final accomplishment of his gracious designs in respect to the redemption of man, was the separation of one family from the rest of mankind, and the placing of them under his own immediate government. Not only were these means suitable, but, as Warburton contends, "a separation so necessary to maintain the doctrine of the unity could not have been supported without penal laws against idolatry; and at the same time such penal laws can never be equitably instituted but under a theocracy. The consequence is, that a theocracy was necessary."—*Divine Legation*, book v, sect. 2.

Without staying to inquire whether or not the learned bishop has in these terms put the case too strongly, it may be observed, that the means were admirably adapted to answer the end. Among idolatrous nations there has always been a sort of spurious liberality, or latitudinarianism of principle and practice. The most devoted worshipers of one deity would, without hesitation, join in the adoration of another. When polytheism became prevalent, this conduct was general. To prevent the corruption of the truth in the case of the Israelites by these means, it became necessary to establish penal laws of great severity against idolatry: and it certainly does not seem easy to conceive how such laws could have been justly framed or executed by any merely human authority. When, however, God became the Sovereign of the nation, every act of idolatry was not only a sin against him, but even high treason

against the head of the state, and as such was justly punished with death.

This theocratic form of government was administered principally through the priesthood. The high priest was, by virtue of his office, the first minister of the great King. Hence Jehovah himself characterized this political constitution as a "kingdom of priests;" and Josephus glories in this, as the great distinguishing feature of the commonwealth. "Where," he asks, "shall we find a better or more righteous constitution than ours, which makes us esteem God to be the Governor of the universe, and permits the priests in general to be the administrators of the principal affairs; while, on the other hand, it confides a superintendence over them to the wisdom of the high priest, their superior? Where shall anything more perfect be discovered? or from what people shall we borrow statutes more beneficial to those who are governed? Our legislator did not advance the priests to the dignity they hold on account of their riches, or any exterior advantage attached to their lot, but solely on account of their learning, which enables them to persuade others to prudent conduct and righteousness of life. These functionaries had committed to them by Moses the execution of the laws, ritual and municipal; for, as they were the constant witnesses of men's actions, they were made the judges in all doubtful cases, and the punishers of those who had incurred the penalty of transgression."—*Josephus Contra Apion.*, lib. ii, cap. 21.

But by what sanctions was this united civil and religious economy sustained? What were the promises and threatenings which it placed before the people as the reward of obedience, or the punishment of transgression? The attentive reader will find that they were exclusively of a temporal character, and referred to prosperous or penal visitations in the present life.

This fact, which is undoubted, has occasioned much discussion and difference of opinion. The first question which arises out of the subject is this: What induced Moses so entirely to omit all reference to *future* rewards and punishments in the promulgation of the law? It has been supposed by some, that this is a clear proof that Moses was entirely ignorant of the immortality of the soul, and consequently of its future condition, and therefore could not use this important influence. A very different opinion has been put forth by Bishop Warburton, who maintains that Moses was fully acquainted with the doctrine of a future state, but that he studiously and of set purpose not only avoided all reference to it in the law, but narrated several events in very guarded language, and with unusual brevity, in order to conceal it; and that this was done in order to

make a universal providence, or present reward and punishment, the uniform sanction of the law.

A third and rather middle course has been taken by Bishop Russell, who says, "We can be at no loss to discover a better reason why Moses did not introduce into his system of laws the sanctions of future rewards and punishments, than that he was desirous to conceal from his people the important doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It will appear that he did not, as has been represented, throw a studied obscurity over every fact which was likely to suggest to the Hebrews the idea of a future existence; but rather that he himself did not enjoy such distinct views of the condition of the human soul after death, as were fitted to be made the foundation of a system of moral retribution in a divine economy."—*Connection*, vol. i, p. 316.

Before proceeding to remark on these conflicting sentiments, an objection may be taken, which, with more or less force, affects them all. They attribute too much to Moses, and too little to God. They display too much of human craft and policy, and far too little of divine wisdom adapting itself to the fallen condition of mankind. To the servant and the house, they give the honor due only to Him who built it.

On the first of these opinions very few words will suffice. The uniform testimony of the patriarchal age proves, that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was well known. That Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were ignorant of this doctrine, is not only incredible, on a general view of their religious condition, but is expressly contradicted by Holy Scripture, which assures us that "they sought an heavenly country." Heb. xi, 16. And that Moses, who not only inherited this theology, but who was also learned in all the wisdom of Egypt,—a nation known at this period to believe in this doctrine;—that he should have been quite ignorant of the immortality of the soul, is impossible.

It appears equally unreasonable to attribute to the Hebrew legislator a studied design to conceal this knowledge, and to keep the Israelites in entire ignorance of it. Neither the general teaching of Moses, nor the argument of the learned bishop, will warrant this conclusion. But to this point we must refer hereafter.

Nor, with all our respect for the talents and reasonings of the learned bishop of Glasgow, can we bring ourselves to believe that Moses had such an imperfect knowledge of this subject, as to prevent him from making it a ground of sanction in his code of laws. This point seems to be so clearly settled by the teaching of Holy Scripture, as scarcely to admit of dispute. Let the reader turn to

Hebrews xi, 24-26, and read, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: *for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*" Now, if we concede to Warburton that it is doubtful whether the faith of Moses had any immediate reference to Christ, as the words will bear another meaning, we may still ask, What consistent interpretation can be put upon the assertion that he "had respect unto the recompense of the reward," if he knew little or nothing of a future state? Let it be observed, the apostle is not speaking in the abstract of the destiny of Moses, but of the motives and influences under which he acted. He renounced the pleasures of Egyptian honor and sin; he entered upon a course of duty the most arduous and embarrassing, and from which he felt a strong aversion. And why did he enter upon this course? Inspiration answers the question, Because "*he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*" When or where was this recompense to be obtained? Certainly not on earth. If this, then, be the meaning of the words, we must believe that Moses, like the other patriarchs, sought a "heavenly country," and looked for the city of God: and surely, if his knowledge of the future could have produced a motive so influential on his own conduct, it might have been placed before others in the hope that it would produce similar results.

What, then, is the truth of the case? How are these difficulties to be solved? The following considerations will do much toward placing the subject in a proper light.

It has been abundantly proved, that in the patriarchal age the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and of a future judgment, were known and believed. The only fragment which we possess of antediluvian teaching, (Jude 14, 15,) is decisive on this point. The omission of Moses to ground his law upon this basis, although it could not support, did not destroy, this tenet. It lived in popular opinion. Warburton himself admits the belief of the Israelites in a future existence, although he denies their acquaintance with reward or punishment in a future life. And Dr. Russel very properly says, "Moses did not conceal from the congregation of Israel the sublime doctrine of eternal life: he merely abstained from explaining to them the laws under which the human race shall enjoy existence after their earthly nature shall have exhausted its powers, and their corruptible shall have put on incorruption."—*Connection*, vol. iii, p 540.

The omission to ground the law on the sanctions of a future life

was not, then, the result of the wisdom or policy of Moses, but of special Divine appointment; and was done to insure the separation of the Israelites from every other nation, to establish and enforce penal laws against idolatry, and to teach and exhibit God's providential government in all things pertaining to the present life. This economy was not one which shed darkness over the future destiny of man, but which, in an eminent manner, cast a glorious light over his temporal condition, and brought him, in all his immediate wants, nearer to God.

But it is necessary that we endeavor to ascertain the extent to which this providential government was carried. Was it national, or did it apply to individuals? We refer, of course, to providence in its extraordinary manifestation under the theocracy.

Warburton carries this providential government to its utmost limits; and declares that, as the Israelites were ignorant of the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishment, they "must **REALLY** have enjoyed that equal providence under which Holy Scripture represents them to have lived; and then, no transgressor escaping punishment, nor any observer of the law missing his reward, human affairs might be kept in good order without the doctrine of a future state."—*Divine Legation*, book v, sect. ii.

This is the most vulnerable part of the bishop's argument; or rather, upon his own principles, the whole argument is here reduced to a question of fact. He contends that either a knowledge of future retribution, or the exercise of an immediate providence, is absolutely necessary to the well-being of society. And, believing that the Israelites were ignorant of the doctrine, he contends that they were placed under a providential government so extensive and exact, that *no transgressor escaped punishment, nor any observer of the law missed reward*. But was this the case? We are told by this very author, that the theocracy was in its greatest vigor during the time of the Judges; and may therefore inquire whether a providential government, so extensive and minute, was administered to Israel at this period.

The reader will refer to the following cases. The family of Achan were stoned, and burned with fire. Joshua vii. Now, in reference to his *sons and daughters*, what was their sin? No information is given of any evil which they did, nor does the nature of the case justify any charge against them; yet they suffered with their guilty parent.

The daughter of Jephthah, whatever may have been the precise character of her fate, affords another very striking proof that at this period transgression was not always visited with present punish-

ment, or obedience crowned with blessing. Here the victim suffered on account of her praiseworthy filial conduct. Reference might also be made to the wives and children of Korah and his company, and other similar instances in the wilderness.

But, although we adduce this proof, that among the Israelites the temporal condition of individuals did not always depend upon the conduct of the person, it does not seem just to place the decision of the question on this ground. The Scripture account of these times does not contain a complete series of biographical sketches, but a narrative of public events: to seek, therefore, in the circumstances of individuals for a key to the genius of this religious economy, appears unjust and unreasonable. This is more especially the case, inasmuch as the manner in which the national theocracy was communicated and enforced seems incompatible with the uniform administration of temporal punishment or reward, according to the transgression or obedience of individuals. Let the threatenings of punishment, and promises of reward, with which the law was enforced, (Lev. xxvi, 3-33,) be carefully read, and it will be seen that they are, to a great extent, national and extraordinary.

These promises and threatenings are national. If the people were obedient, rain was to be given in its season, the harvest and the vintage should be abundant, peace was to reign throughout the land, their enemies were to be powerless to injure, and the people were to enjoy the protection, blessing, and presence of God. These blessings are set forth, not as limited to individuals, but to the public. Such, also, were the threatenings of punishment. If they sinned, pestilence was to be sent among them, their enemies would invade and subdue them, the earth was to be sterile as brass, the heavens would give no rain, wild beasts would spread terror through the land, famine in all its horrid forms was denounced, and they were to be vanquished in war, until, being placed fully in the hands of their enemies, the land was filled with desolation. Could these blessings have been given as a reward for general obedience, without, in some measure, imparting good to individual sinners? or these evils afflict the land because of prevailing transgression, without, to some extent, afflicting individuals who were pious? Or, to put the case more strongly, if one part of the people were obedient, and the other disobedient, how could these blessings and curses be simultaneously dispensed? It is seen at once that they are incompatible. How, then, is this difficulty to be explained? By the circumstance that *these were extraordinary sanctions.*

The law contained provisions for the punishment of open sinners, apostates, and idolaters; and appointed the manner of dealing with

those who committed sin intentionally, but not in a spirit of apostasy and rebellion. If, then, these several enactments were enforced, iniquity could not generally prevail; if they were not, then the dereliction of duty, and sympathy with sin, which this conduct implied, made the transgression national in its character, and thus exposed Israel to the extraordinary intervention which the execution of these threatenings so clearly implies. When this took place, as the inflictions were general, the innocent to some extent certainly suffered with the guilty.

This is clearly shown in a case which, although it can scarcely be regarded as a national punishment, evidently arose out of the great wickedness of one of the tribes of Israel. When the Benjamites were defeated, and almost exterminated, in the war which arose out of the ill-treatment of a Levite's wife, is it to be supposed that, among all the women and young people of this tribe, none were found as irreproachable as those of the other families of Israel? It is clearly impossible to reconcile such events with that exact and individual application of the theocratic government which should inflict prompt punishment on every offender, and give to every obedient person present prosperity; and hence Bishop Russel has, with great propriety, come to the conclusion that "the theocracy must be understood to have been confined to the national interests of the Jews; to have secured happiness and peace to them, so long as they continued steadfast in their religious faith; while it brought upon their heads the visitation of Divine wrath, the avenging sword, the famine, or the pestilence, so often as they gave themselves up to the superstitions of the heathen, and thereby violated the covenant which their fathers had sworn."—*Connection*, vol. iii, p. 516.

But if this be the case, what becomes of the argument? If the Scripture account of the period when the theocracy was exercised with the greatest vigor proves that offenders were not punished, and that individual obedience was not always rewarded with exemption from temporal affliction, and crowned with prosperity, then, according to the bishop's argument, a knowledge of future rewards and punishments would be necessary; and this knowledge the Israelites undoubtedly possessed.

The inspired author of Psalm lxxiii complains that his confidence in God had been severely shaken, that "his feet were almost gone, his steps had well-nigh slipped." And what was the cause of this? He informs us: "I saw the prosperity of the wicked. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have no bands in their death." He thence infers, "I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and

chastened every morning." Nor does he obtain spiritual comfort until he repairs to the sanctuary of God: "Then understood I their end." Here light and consolation are poured upon his mind, and he exclaims: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Admitting this Psalm to have been composed at some time between the establishment of the Hebrew monarchy and the captivity,* it clearly shows an acquaintance with the doctrine of a future state, and refers to it for a solution of those apparent anomalies which are presented in the dispensations of Providence.

In every view of this subject, it is impossible to estimate aright the religious knowledge and faith of the Israelites without regarding the foundation of patriarchal theology upon which it was built. We might as reasonably attempt to form a correct notion of the religion of the apostles without any reference to Judaism, as to obtain any clear view of that of the Israelites without taking into account the faith of the patriarchs.

From the whole, it appears that the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and of future retribution, were prevalent and popular among the Israelites at the time of the exodus; that to these Moses, by divine command, superadded that special providential government which the theocracy required; and that therefore the Mosaic economy, without removing from their minds the notion of God's spiritual and eternal government, by these means brought before them more fully his present interposition in temporal affairs.

It will now be necessary to inquire into the typical and preparatory character of this economy.

Many learned writers have altogether denied that the Mosaic institutions were regarded by the early Israelites as typical of the Messiah's kingdom. And it is very obvious that, in the glorious sunlight of the gospel, a significancy, similarity, and point may be discovered in the persons, rites, sacrifices, and ceremonies of the Mosaic ritual, when regarded in reference to the person, work, and kingdom of the Messiah, which might be utterly unknown to the early Israelites.

But, notwithstanding this, we cannot adopt the opinion to which reference has been made. It appears to have been an established principle in the economy of grace, that the end should, at least to some extent, be known from the beginning. Whatsoever obscurity might have rested upon primitive revelations, it is certain that the

* This opinion is supported by Dr. Wells, Travell, Green, and Townsend.

person and work of the Redeemer were announced to our first parents. It has been shown that they must at least have had some distinct idea of a promised Saviour, of his suffering and triumph, and also of the benefit and blessing which should thereby result to mankind.—*Patriarchal Age*, pp. 154–156. The corrupted traditions of the heathen world unite with the records of patriarchal faith to prove this point.

This is still further established by the appointment and continued practice of sacrifice. As the origin of this rite never has been, and never can be, accounted for, except on the supposition that it was divinely instituted; so its continued practice, and especially the saving exercise of faith in connection with it, will never be satisfactorily explained but by admitting that these persons had some knowledge of that great atonement which was typified by these recurring animal oblations.

The fact that this typical character of the Mosaic economy was perceived by the Hebrews who lived under its operation, appears to be fully established by the authority of the New Testament. For St. Paul, when referring to the tabernacle and its service, says that this “was a figure for the time then present,” Heb. ix, 9; and, consequently, it must be admitted that, however indistinct and imperfect the idea which the “figure” gave of the good things which were then future, it was known that they not only served sacred purposes in connection with the Levitical law, but were likewise intended to convey some intelligible information respecting that great crowning scheme of grace, which was uniformly expected in the last days to complete the merciful purposes of God.

That scheme of religion, therefore, which God gave to the Hebrews in the wilderness was not only an elaborate ecclesiastical system complete in all its parts, and incorporated into the national economy and political administration of the people: it was otherwise remarkable in these several respects. It was based upon the theology of the preceding age, and, uniting all the pure elements and divinely appointed rites of the primitive dispensation, it perpetuated in the Levitical economy all the religious truth which had up to this time been given to the world. It shed a flood of light upon God’s providential government of mankind, and, by uniting every part of Hebrew conduct and manners, every element of public and private life, with religion, and making national prosperity and adversity contingent upon obedience or transgression, it brought God eminently nigh unto them, and exhibited his law as pervading the wide range of their personal and public purposes, pursuits, and destinies.

CHAPTER III.

THE HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITES UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF JOSHUA AND THE JUDGES.

PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE HEBREWS WHEN JOSHUA WAS CALLED TO BE THEIR LEADER.—The Passage of the Jordan foretold—Spies sent to Jericho—The Crossing of Jordan miraculously effected—The Passover celebrated—The angel Jehovah appears to Joshua—Jericho taken and destroyed—Defeat of Israel at Ai—The Cause discovered—Sin and Punishment of Achan—Confederation of the Canaanites—Guile of the Gibeonites, and their Doom—The combined Army of Canaan attack Gibeon—Joshua marches to its Relief—Obtains a great Victory—Miraculous Fall of Hail—The Sun and Moon stand still—The five Kings put to Death—A second Combination of Canaanitish Kings—Joshua renews the War—Completely vanquishes the Enemy in a great Battle—The War continued until thirty-one Kingdoms were subdued—The Divine Interposition under which this Conquest was effected specially attested by Expulsion of some Tribes by Means of the Hornet—The Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh retire to their Portion on the east side of Jordan—The altar Ed—The Portion of Caleb assigned—The Land divided—The pious Exhortations and Death of Joshua—**IMPORTANT CHANGE IN HEBREW POLITY CONSEQUENT ON THE DEATH OF JOSHUA**—The Purpose of God in the Theocracy—Renewal of the War by Judah and Simeon—The partial Success of the Hebrews the Result of imperfect Faith in God—The Remissness of Israel reproved by the Angel of the Lord—They continue disobedient, and fall into Idolatry—The Case of Micah and the Danites—The Outrage at Gibeah, and terrible Consequences to the Tribe of Benjamin. **FIRST SERVITUDE** under Chushan-rishathaim—Israel delivered by Othniel—The Character of the Authority exercised by the Judges. **SECOND SERVITUDE** under the Moabites—Ehud and Shamgar Judges. **THIRD SERVITUDE** under the Canaanites—Deborah and Barak deliver Israel—The Song of Deborah. **FOURTH SERVITUDE** under the Midianites—Story of Ruth—Heroism of Gideon—Abimelech, Tola, and Jair successively follow each other as Judges. **FIFTH SERVITUDE** under the Ammonites—Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Judges. **SIXTH SERVITUDE** of Israel under the Philistines—Samson, Eli, and Samuel, Judges—The Unfaithfulness of Israel renders a pure Theocracy impracticable—Chronological Arrangement of the Events of this Period.

JOSHUA succeeded to the government of the Hebrews at a time which will ever be regarded as a great crisis in their history. They had completed their wanderings in the desert, they had subdued some clans on the eastern side of the Jordan; but the principal portion of the territory which had been promised as their inheritance was still retained by populous and martial tribes, who were aware of their approach and of its object, and who were prepared to offer a desperate resistance.

Before the great work of conquering these nations and of obtaining possession of the promised land was attempted, Moses, who merited the high title of “the father of his people” more than any man that ever lived, was taken away; and the entire direction of affairs, and the conduct of the war, devolved upon Joshua. This circumstance appeared unpropitious; but it may not be difficult to ascertain the cause. In the entire dealings of God with his people

up to this period, He had clearly exhibited His great power as their protector, and His wisdom as their guide. And now, lest the world should attribute to the prowess or skill of Moses a successful invasion of Canaan, he is removed; and his successor, under immediate Divine direction, is called to the work, that the excellency of the power might appear to be of God, and not of man. Hence the Lord assures him, "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Joshua i, 5. In connection with this gracious promise, God gave Joshua a renewed assurance that the Israelites should possess the land which he had promised them in its utmost extent; and as a pledge of the speedy accomplishment of this promise, told him that in three days they should pass over Jordan. This appears to have been the first occasion on which any notice was given of a removal of the camp, that having been on all previous occasions regulated by the cloudy pillar. But this was a movement of particular importance, and to be attended by a miracle of the most extraordinary kind; and therefore the fact, that the time for passing over the Jordan was publicly announced three days before it was to take place, greatly enhanced the effect of this miracle, and proved that it could not have consisted in an advantage which Joshua took of an accidental circumstance.

Having received this command, Joshua sent two men to discover the condition of the city of Jericho, a walled town of great strength, distant about seven miles from the Jordan, and which, from its position, would naturally be the first object of their attack. The two spies safely reached Jericho, and obtained lodgings in the house of Rahab. This woman, although she knew the design of these men, carefully concealed them; for so active and vigilant were the authorities of the city on account of the proximity of the Israelitish camp, that they discovered the ingress of the two Hebrews, and sent to Rahab to inquire respecting them. She, however, gave her secreted guests every information concerning the fears of the people, and succeeded in sending them safely away; exacting an oath from them that, in the ruin of the city, herself and all in her house should be preserved. The exposition given in the epistle to the Hebrews alone enables us to understand the strange conduct of this female, which would not otherwise have been easily explained. But the author of that sacred book tells us that she acted thus under the influence of faith: by which we understand that, from the reports which she had heard of God's dealings with the Israelites, she was led to believe in him, and to hazard her life in saving his servants; by which she identified herself with his cause, and consequently secured her life, and the Divine blessing.

The spies having returned to Joshua, and the time for passing the Jordan having arrived, the tents were struck, and the whole army put in motion. But on this occasion a new order of march was enjoined. In all their previous journeyings, the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun marched in the van, followed by Reuben, Simeon, and Gad; after these came the ark and other furniture of the tabernacle, borne by the priests; the other tribes following as a rear-guard. But now the priests bearing the ark were commanded to march in advance of the whole body, and the people were forbidden to approach nearer than one thousand yards to them. In this manner they proceeded until the priests reached the Jordan, which at this season overflowed its banks; when, no sooner had the feet of the priests touched the brim of the waters, than the waters above were stayed and rose in heaps, while those below ran on in their course towards the Dead Sea, leaving the bed of the whole river at this place quite dry. The priests then marched into the midst of the river, where they remained until all the host of Israel had passed over. This being completed, God commanded Joshua to select a man from each of the twelve tribes, to go into the midst of the river where the priests stood, and to take from thence each of them a stone. These stones were conveyed to Gilgal, and piled there as a prominent and durable monument of this miraculous event. After the stones had been brought out of the river, the priests also bearing the ark came out; and as soon as their feet were again placed on the dry ground, the waters, which had been thus restrained by Divine Power, rolled on in their usual course, and the Jordan overflowed its banks as heretofore.

We have in this event one of the most striking miracles recorded in the Scriptures. Here are two elements which were not found even in the dividing of the Red Sea. A natural agent, a strong east wind, was then employed: here no material agency whatever appears, but, on the contrary, the exertion of a force repugnant to the established laws of nature: the waters of a rapid and deep, if not a broad, river are at once suspended in their course, and piled up in a heap by the immediate exercise of the power of God. On that occasion the miracle was suddenly and unexpectedly wrought; here the time was fixed three days previously. In this case also the prodigy was effected at mid-day, not only in the sight of all Israel, but also in that of the agents and spies of the Canaanitish nations, who watched with intense interest every movement of their Hebrew invaders, as is evident from the entire tenor of the history, and were panic-struck at the sight of such a splendid display of Divine Power. This must not be regarded as a mere inference: it is taught us in

the express terms of holy writ. Joshua v, 1. It was while the surrounding heathen lay under the influence of this panic, that God commanded Joshua to circumcise all the males who had not been subjected to this rite, which, it appears, had been greatly neglected during the journeyings of the wilderness.

The passage of the Jordan was effected on the tenth day of the first month, wanting only five days of forty years from the time when they left Egypt. Being all circumcised, the people were prepared to celebrate the passover this year, which service also had been intermitted from the day when it was performed the second time at Sinai. Although from the period of their location in the neighborhood of Canaan there can be no doubt that the Israelites were partially fed with corn and other ordinary fruits of the earth, yet the manna continued to fall around the camp until the keeping of this passover. But on the day after its celebration, it entirely ceased, and the people obtained their supplies of food from ordinary sources.

Joshua was now favored with an extraordinary revelation from God. Jericho was completely shut up; none went out, or came into the city; and while he was inspecting the walls, and considering the best means of reducing it, a man suddenly appeared as standing over against him with a drawn sword in his hand. The aspect and deportment of this stranger at once arrested the attention of the Hebrew chief, who, inspired with divine courage, went to him, and asked, "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." Joshua immediately recognized in the speaker the Divine Person who had so often spoken unto Moses; and he "fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." Joshua v, 13-15. This Divine Person then proceeded to assure his servant of success in his great work: "See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor." Joshua vi, 2. He then went on to dictate the manner in which the city should be taken, which was not to be in the ordinary course of warlike attack, but by the immediate intervention of Divine Power. The plan was thus detailed: "Ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns; and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the peo-

ple shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him." Verses 3-5.

These commands were obeyed, and the promise was fulfilled. After marching round the city in the manner prescribed, on the seventh day they did so seven times; and then, while the priests sounded their trumpets, and the people raised a great shout, the walls fell down flat, and the men of war went up and spoiled the city, and destroyed all the inhabitants, except Rahab and her immediate relations. So complete was this destruction, that all the animals were slain, and nothing was saved but gold, silver, brass, and iron, which were purified by being passed through the fire, and then placed in the sanctuary of the Lord. Thus did God interpose in behalf of his people, and the fame of this wondrous proceeding struck terror into all the surrounding country. (See *Appendix*, note 41.)

Ai, a city near Bethel, was the next object to which Joshua directed his attention. Having sent a party to obtain information, they returned, and recommended their chief to send a force of three thousand men against it, as amply sufficient to subdue the town. That number of men was accordingly dispatched on this service. But they had no sooner reached the gate of the town, than the inhabitants sallied out and completely routed them, pursuing them to a considerable distance, and cutting off thirty-six men. This repulse spread the utmost consternation and dismay through the Israelitish camp. Even Joshua cast himself on the ground before the Lord with his clothes rent, and dust upon his head. The elders of Israel followed his example. The prayer of Joshua on this occasion is beautiful and appropriate; and the reverential regard which he evinced for the glory of the name of God is especially remarkable. His supplication receives an immediate and gracious answer, but one of very fearful import. He was told by the Lord that Israel had sinned; that they had broken his covenant, and taken of the accursed thing; and that he would not be with them again, until the sin was detected and punished.

Joshua accordingly rose up early in the morning, and commenced an investigation by lot, with a view to the discovery of the offender. This course was successful. After extending the investigation to the several tribes, families, households, and individuals, Achan, of the family of Zabdi, of the tribe of Judah, was pointed out as the transgressor. When exhorted to do so by Joshua, he confessed his sin, and admitted that he had coveted a Babylonish garment, and some silver and gold, which he saw among the spoils that he had taken from Jericho, and concealed them in his tent. He was immediately stoned to death, and, with all his property, burned with fire. From

the text of the narrative it would appear that his sons and daughters shared his fate; but this some commentators doubt. After this vindication of the Divine law, Ai was easily taken and destroyed.

The Canaanites, alarmed at the fate of Jericho and Ai, and fearing lest each city might in turn be thus subdued, determined at once to form a confederation for the common safety, and, if possible, to overwhelm the invaders in one great united effort. While this combination was being carried into effect, there was one people who thought they might adopt a more politic course than to be a party to this league. The people of Gibeon, a tribe of the Hivites, selected a few of their number as ambassadors; and, attiring them in clothes greatly worn, with some fragments of stale and moldy provision in their sacks, in this style they presented themselves before Joshua and the elders of Israel at Gilgal, and declared that they had come from a very far country, where the fame of God's interposition on behalf of the Israelites had reached them, and that they had been sent forth to solicit for a league of amity to be formed between Israel and their nation. In this case even Joshua erred. Deceived by appearances, he with the elders of Israel did not stay to ask counsel of God, but concluded a solemn league, and confirmed it with an oath.

In the brief space of three days the delusion was dispelled, and the Israelites learned the true character of those with whom they had made this covenant, and found that they resided in the vicinity of their camp, even at Gibeon. Joshua evidently felt the difficulty of the position into which he had placed himself by the too hasty confirmation of the covenant. He saw that though on the one hand it would expose Israel to great obloquy, yet it would be unjust to violate the covenant, and to destroy those whom they had sworn to save. But he nevertheless perceived that as the league was obtained by falsehood and guile, the Gibeonites were not entitled to benefits so surreptitiously acquired. He therefore, after expostulating with them, determined to preserve their lives, but to reduce them to a state of servitude; making them hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation and the house of the Lord: a doom to which they patiently submitted. (See *Appendix*, note 42.)

Meanwhile the confederation of the Canaanitish kings being complete, and having heard of the league of amity which had been made between Israel and Gibeon, they determined to wage war against that city, that they might punish those who had joined their enemies, and prevent others from a similar defection. The five associated kings therefore marched with all their forces to Gibeon, and the immense host "made war against it." In this emergency the men of

Gibeon sent to Joshua, imploring his aid, as the only hope they had of escaping the fury of their numerous enemies.

Joshua instantly responded to the call, and, with all his army, marched to the relief of Gibeon. This movement was made with the greatest rapidity. After marching all night, the Israelites attacked the confederate kings suddenly, and defeated them in a very sanguinary battle. This conflict may be regarded as one of the most important events in the conquest of Canaan, and was accordingly distinguished by eminently Divine interposition. The first indication of this, was a Divine communication especially made to Joshua, by which he was assured of success. "Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee." Joshua x, 8. The event justified the prediction: the Canaanites, panicstruck by this sudden and unexpected attack, fled before the Hebrews. In this rout, the Lord fought for Israel; for he "cast down great stones from heaven" upon their enemies, so that a larger number died from this cause than from the sword. (See *Appendix*, note 43.)

As the greatest difficulty which the Israelites had to contend with in this war arose from the strong fortifications of the walled towns of Canaan, Joshua regarded this conflict as a great crisis in his enterprise, and saw the immense importance of totally destroying this confederate host, before any part of it could gain the shelter of their impregnable walls. The geographical position of the field of battle, in respect to the cities of the allied kings, enhanced this opportunity, and, consequently, mightily increased the desire of the Hebrew leader to effect an entire destruction of his foes. Jerusalem, Jarmuth, Eglon, and Hebron, stood on that range of high hills which extends from north to south, through Canaan; Jerusalem being farthest north, and the others in order lying to the southward of it. Lachish lay to the south-west of Jerusalem; while Gibeon was a few miles north of that city. As Joshua marched from Gilgal, his course would lie nearly west. Leaving Jerusalem a few miles on the left, he attacked the besieging army in the rear, and, cutting off their retreat to their own cities, drove them in a westerly direction down the vale of Ajalon, toward Makkedah. In this conflict and pursuit the day drew to a close, and the sun was approaching the horizon, when Joshua, seeing that darkness would afford safety to his enemies, and being led by a strong Divine impulse, said "to the Lord, in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies." Joshua x, 12, 13. The word spoken was attended by the

power of God; nature obeyed the authoritative mandate; and the day was extended at least for several hours; and thus the object of Joshua was fully accomplished. (See *Appendix*, note 44.)

During the progress of this conflict, and whilst the Israelites were pursuing their enemies, it was told Joshua, that the five kings had taken refuge in a cave at Makkedah. He immediately commanded that huge stones should be rolled on the entrance of the cave, and a watch set over it; but that the pursuit should be continued. Thus did Joshua destroy this great army, except a few who had escaped to "fenced cities." He then returned to Makkedah, took the kings from the cave, and put them to death. The same day the city of Makkedah was taken, and the inhabitants utterly destroyed.

After this decisive victory, Joshua prosecuted the war by successively attacking the several cities of the south of Canaan,—Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir; so that from Gibeon to Kadesh-barnea there was no enemy that could stand before the successful Israelites. There can be no doubt that the Hebrew warriors at this time displayed great personal prowess,—their martial strength and courage were of a high order; yet the reduction of so large a territory, including so many fenced cities, defended by superior numbers, with the advantages of arms, equipment, and experience, and especially in a country peculiarly adapted to defensive war, clearly shows the interposition of Jehovah in behalf of his people. The subjugation of Canaan was not a mere conquest effected by the talents of the general, and the valor of the army: it was the Lord who cast out the enemy from before his people, for the accomplishment of his own purposes. Joshua, whose testimony on this point must be regarded as unexceptionable, ascribes his success to its proper cause: "Because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel." Joshua x, 42.

After this successful campaign, Joshua and all Israel returned to Gilgal, where the women and children, with the cattle and property, remained in the fortified camp. It does not, however, appear that any long cessation from the toils and hazards of war was allowed them; for we are informed that another, and even more formidable, combination of Canaanitish nations was soon after formed against Israel. The kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites, and Hivites, united their forces, and "went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the seashore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many." Joshua xi, 4. Josephus, who is frequently more ready to give numbers than to assign the authority upon which they rest, has told us, that this army consisted "of three hundred thousand footmen, ten thou-

sand horsemen, and twenty thousand chariots."—Book v, chap. i, sect. 18. Whether this account be correct or not, it is certain that this force was greatly beyond what the Israelites in their own strength could hope to resist. The Lord, therefore, again interposed, and encouraged his servants, and said unto Joshua, "Be not afraid because of them: for to-morrow about this time will I deliver them all up slain before Israel." Verse 6. This promise was fulfilled. Joshua, gathering courage from the assurance of Divine support, did not wait for his enemies to attack his position. By a bold and spirited movement, he came upon them suddenly, carried their encampment in a manner as spirited as the attack was unexpected, and obtained a complete victory. The power of the enemy being thus broken, he followed up his success, by vigorously assaulting the several petty kingdoms in succession. This was a work which required patient perseverance; but the energy of the general, and the determination of the Israelites, overcame every obstacle, and the land which God had promised to Abraham as the inheritance of his seed, is conquered and placed at their disposal. A detail of the operations of this war is not given by the inspired penman; nor is this omission one of those which a religious mind will feel very anxious to see supplied from other sources. When a narration of the important events of several years is condensed into two or three short chapters, the fact itself is a significant intimation that, however necessary these operations might have been to the accomplishment of the Divine purpose respecting his people Israel, they are not to be drawn into examples for the future conduct of mankind in ordinary cases.

The result of this war was, that thirty-one kingdoms were subdued; and the whole country, from the mountains of Lebanon to Kadesh-barnea, lay open to occupation by the Israelites.

Having thus successfully terminated the war, Joshua proceeded to carry into effect the commandment which Moses had recorded in Deut. xxvii, 4–26. He marched the people northward to Mount Gerizim, and, having built an altar unto the Lord, according to the letter of the law, he offered up thereon burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. The people were then divided, and he placed one-half on Mount Gerizim, and the other on Mount Ebal; "and afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law." Joshua viii, 34. In connection with this ceremony, and as a part of the legal requirement, he set up stones, and plastered them with plaster, and wrote on them "all the words of this law very plainly." Deut. xxvii, 8.

Most extravagant and ridiculous interpretations have been put,

by the rabbins, on this circumstance. Some have supposed that the entire Pentateuch was inscribed on these stones; others have moderated their estimate so far as to limit it to the Book of Deuteronomy; but the Jewish writers have insisted upon it, that the whole five books of Moses were written here in seventy different languages. Apart from all this extravagance, we may safely conclude, that the writing was really a brief recital of the blessings and curses which God had announced as the reward of obedience, or the punishment of transgression. The solemn ceremonial of reciting the law, in connection with these awful sanctions, in the audience of the whole people, was not only calculated to strengthen the faith, and confirm the hopes, of the Israelites; it was equally adapted to terrify the remaining inhabitants of the land, as they would see in it a confirmation of all the rumors which they had heard, that God had brought up his people out of Egypt, to give them possession of this land.

It must not be supposed that, in these wars, all the Canaanitish nations were destroyed; nor does it appear that Joshua attempted the subjugation of all the tribes. There were some "cities which stood *still* in their strength," whose walls appeared impregnable to the means which Joshua had at his command, and whose rulers, taught prudence by the fearful fate of others, had abstained from attacking the Israelites. We have a specific account of these places: the land of the Philistines; all Geshuri, a city and district not far from Hermon; another district on the sea-coast, occupied by the Canaanites, near Sihon; the land of the Giblites, which was near Tyre; all the eastern side of Lebanon, with the neighboring hill-country, in the extreme north of the land; besides the country of the Sidonians. Joshua xiii, 1-6.

The whole of this invasion, and the success with which the Israelites were crowned, stand out to our view as a marvelous display of a special Providence. God had promised to give the seed of Jacob this land, and to cast out its inhabitants before them; and, although centuries had intervened, and very many changes had taken place, both in respect of the Canaanitish nations and the Israelites; yet the prophetic word of Jehovah is fulfilled, and, despite the timid apprehensions of Israel, and the daring courage and physical strength of their foes, the whole land is commanded to be divided by lot among the heirs of Abraham.

There is, however, one part of this divine interposition which is worthy of more attention than it has usually received. God not only exercised his omnipotent influence in saving and strengthening his people, and in paralyzing the power of their foes; he also drove out nations before them, principally by agents of his own appoint-

ment. The language of Joshua on this subject, in his final address to the people, is remarkable. The Lord, speaking by him, says, "And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow." Chap. xxiv, 12. This, it will be perceived, is only the fulfillment of promises made long before unto Moses: "I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee. I will not drive them out from before thee in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee." Exod. xxiii, 28, 29. (See *Appendix*, note 45.)

Joshua, having closed the campaign, and complied with the command of Moses, by reciting the law with its sanctions from Ebal and Gerizim, called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh; and, having commended them for the honorable manner in which they had redeemed their pledge to assist their brethren in the war, gave them leave to return to their families, and occupy their possession on the east side of Jordan. "So Joshua blessed them, and sent them away; and they went unto their tents." Joshua xxii, 6. And they returned, taking with them "very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment," (verse 8,) as their share of the spoil which had been taken from the conquered kingdoms; and these they were commanded to divide with those who had remained to protect their families and property.

But when they had reached the east side of Jordan, before they separated to take possession of the portions of territory which had been severally assigned to them, they built an altar, "a great altar," there.

When this circumstance was known by the main body of the Israelites, they were greatly excited and distressed; for it was immediately regarded as an indication that the trans-jordanic tribes would regard themselves as a separate people, and that the altar was built for the purposes of worship and sacrifice, independent of the tabernacle of Moses. The whole congregation, therefore, gathered themselves together in Shiloh, and prepared to make war on their brethren, to punish what appeared to them to be a gross act of political and religious defection. They, however, wisely determined, in the first instance, to send Eleazer the high priest, with ten princes, one from each tribe. This deputation, having arrived at the assembly of the two tribes and a half, charged them, in the name of the whole congregation of Israel, in very severe terms, with sin and rebellion; assuring them that, in case they regarded their settlement to the east of Jor-

dan as unclean, because the sanctuary stood on the other side, they were invited to come over to the other side, where they should have possessions among their brethren; concluding their energetic appeal by saying, "But rebel not against the Lord, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar beside the altar of the Lord our God." Verse 19.

The Reubenites and their companions replied to this sharp address, in language honorable to both their piety and their patriotism. They denied, in the most positive terms, that they entertained any idea of rebellion, or of instituting an altar of sacrifice on their side of the river. They protested that, on the contrary, they had built the altar to prevent this very evil. Their defense is throughout manly, energetic, and pious. They thus explain their intention:—"Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice; but that it may be a witness between us and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the Lord before him with our burnt-offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace-offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the Lord." Verses 26, 27.

The priest and the princes were greatly pleased with this declaration, and regarded it as an indication of the divine presence and blessing. They then returned to the congregation at Shiloh; and the Reubenites named the altar ED, "witness or testimony."

Joshua now proceeded, in obedience to the commandment which he had received, to allot the land amongst the several tribes and families who had not as yet obtained settlements. This brings before us an episode in the history, which is not only interesting in itself, but important in respect to the main narrative, as it fixes the chronology of this division of the country. When Joshua was proceeding to the execution of this task, the children of Judah came unto him, with Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, who was of that tribe, and who addressed Joshua thus: "Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses, the man of God, concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. Nevertheless, my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God. And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even

since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said." Joshua xiv, 6-12.

Joshua at once admitted the justice of this claim, "and Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance." Verse 13. The grant must, however, be understood to refer, not to the city, for that was afterwards appropriated to the Levites, but to the surrounding country. This allocation determined the lot of the tribe of Judah, which necessarily included the portion of Caleb.

As we have intimated, this event also enables us to ascertain the duration of the war, and to fix the time when this division of the land took place. Caleb and Joshua, with the other spies, were sent by Moses to obtain information respecting the land of Canaan, after the erection of the tabernacle, in the second year after the exodus, Caleb being then forty years old. He was at this time eighty-five years old; so that this division took place in the forty-seventh year from the exodus. Now Joshua passed over Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, forty years after the departure from Egypt. Consequently Caleb was fully seventy-eight years of age when he entered into Canaan; and hence it is seen that from six to seven years were occupied in the war of subjugation. According to the chronology adopted in this work, these events will stand thus:—

		B. C.
Era of Abraham's removal into Canaan.....		2038
Thence to the exodus.....	430 years	1608
From the exodus to the sending of the spies.....	2 —	1606
From the sending of the spies to the passage over Jordan.....	38 —	1568
From passing over Jordan to the end of the war.....	7 —	1561

The last two periods of thirty-eight and seven years make forty-five years, which carried Caleb from his fortieth to his eighty-fifth year.

The tribe of Judah being thus first provided for, the other half tribe of Manasseh and the tribe of Ephraim obtained their inheritance. The portion of these tribes lay in the northern parts of Canaan. There is some difficulty in placing the events of this period in chronological order. The arrangement of the chapters in our authorized

version of Joshua is not borne out by the scope of the narrative. And Josephus seems to represent the tabernacle to have been erected before they began to divide the land: but this is plainly corrected by the sacred text; for when the land to the west of Jordan began to be divided, there were nine tribes and a half to be provided for, while, at the erection of the tabernacle, we are distinctly told there were but seven tribes who had not yet obtained a possession.

It appears, therefore, that the course of events was as follows: Joshua, after having subdued the country, proceeded to divide it. On entering upon this task, he was met by the appeal of Caleb, which led him at once to fix the location of the tribe and families of Judah. He then proceeded with the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh. These, having obtained their allotments, wished to proceed to take possession of their respective portions. But Joshua thought it desirable, before the tribes separated, to set up the tabernacle. Shiloh was the place selected for this sacred tent. Here it was accordingly set up, and the ordinances of the Mosaic ritual duly observed. Joshua xviii, 1, 2. This being done, the Hebrew leader wished to allocate the remaining seven tribes; but the difficulties which obstructed their brethren in taking possession of their lots were so great, that Joshua had to rebuke their backwardness, and to ask, "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?" Verse 3. This expostulation produced obedience. He sent men through all the country, who made an exact record of the whole territory, with all its cities and towns. It was then divided between the seven tribes by lot before the Lord in Shiloh. After all this had been done, the children of Israel assigned to Joshua "the city which he asked, even Timnath-serah in Mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein." Joshua xix, 50. Joshua then appointed three cities of refuge on the west side of Jordan, as Moses had appointed three on the east side. He also gave forty-eight cities, with their suburbs and surrounding lands, as provision and residence for the Levites.

Having completed his great work, he assembled the principal men of the several tribes together, and briefly alluding to what the Lord had done for them, proceeded, in a manner and spirit very similar to that displayed in the last addresses of Moses, to incite them to a steady and persevering obedience to the divine will, assuring them that, if they were faithful to their covenant with Jehovah, he would certainly cast out all their enemies before them, and crown them with abundant blessing; but that disobedience would certainly work their ruin.

The ardent spirit of the aged chief was not yet satisfied: he again assembled the tribes of Israel: on this occasion they met at Shechem. Here he recounted to them more at length the dealings of Jehovah with them and their fathers, pointing out the great deliverances which had been wrought on their behalf. He then most earnestly entreated them to purge themselves from every vestige of idolatry, and to decide whether they would serve the Lord or not, at the same time recording his determination to be faithful to Jehovah. The people responded to his appeal, and unitedly declared that they would serve the Lord. Resolved to give the greatest effect to this covenant, Joshua wrote down an account of the transaction, and preserved it with the book of the law. He then took a great stone, and set it up under an oak, as a perpetual witness of the solemn pledge.

This venerable servant of God, having thus fulfilled his vocation, allowed the people to depart every one to his inheritance; and shortly after died, aged one hundred and ten years, and was buried in the border of his inheritance at Mount Ephraim. Eleazar, the son of Aaron, also died about this time, and was buried in the portion of Phinehas his son, at Mount Ephraim. And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they buried in the parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.

Although it is intended to continue the narrative of public affairs in as unbroken a form as possible; we yet cannot pass from the government of Joshua to that of the Judges without noticing the greatness of the transition, and the nature of the change. Prior to the vocation of Moses, the descendants of Abraham, at least in the line of Jacob, were governed by the heads of the several tribes and families, on the simple principle of patriarchal life. When, however, Moses was appointed to lead the people out of Egypt and through the wilderness, although the existence of this primitive mode of government was distinctly recognized, (for he was sent to "the elders of Israel," (Exod. iii, 16,) and at Sinai these authorities are referred to as "the rulers of the congregation," Exod. xxxiv, 31,) yet the supreme power, under God, was vested in the son of Amram. This was still more strikingly the case when his successor marched across the Jordan to conquer the kings and nations of Canaan. He was the general commanding in chief. The entire government of the people, as well as the direction of the war, was vested in him. But it is a remarkable fact, that he appointed no successor. Nor did he, so far as we are informed, take any steps to consolidate the several tribes into one people, any further than this was done by their com-

mon lineage and religion. When, therefore, Joshua was removed by death, the Israelites are brought under our notice as twelve separate clans, each independent of the other, and being, in all the ramification of their tribes and families, under the government of their own hereditary chiefs.

There appears to be no doubt that, as God raised up Moses and Joshua to do his will, and to show forth his power, in the deliverance and direction of the Israelites ; so it was his purpose, having brought them into the promised land, that they should be allowed to fall back into their primitive mode of government, that the character and efficiency of that theocratic rule, under which it was the divine purpose to place them, might be fully developed and publicly displayed.

Nor can we conceive a more glorious exhibition of the theocracy, than that which would thus have been given to the world, if the fidelity and obedience of the Israelites had been such as to have carried it into full effect. If we had seen the various tribes and families of Israel living under the mild paternal rule of their hereditary chiefs, with no other political bond of union ; yet standing out as a great and powerful nation, their principle of unity, and the source of their power arising out of their covenant relation to Jehovah, the purpose of God in their political character would have been fully exhibited.

Nor can a doubt be entertained either that this was the Divine will, or that the obedience of the people would have secured the fullness of these covenant designs. When the religious training which this people had received in the wilderness, the access unto God which their solemn services afforded, the purity of doctrine and efficient spiritual influences with which they were favored, as detailed in the preceding chapter ;—when all these privileges are considered, in connection with oft-repeated miraculous interpositions in their behalf, need we be surprised at the extent of the requirement ? If Israel had been faithful, the blessings connected with their dispensation, and their covenant relation to God, would have been amply sufficient to raise them to the highest pitch of national prosperity and power. And this in their case would have been a glorious display of the government of God. The theocracy evidently implied two things : First, the constant interposition of God in all their national affairs, watching over their interests, defending them from danger, guiding them in perplexity, and supplying all their wants ; and, Secondly, the absence of all that civil and political machinery by which the nations of this world usually endeavor to unite masses of people into one public confederacy. Without the first, the theocracy would have existed only in name ; without the second, there would be no public evidence of its existence. But in the circumstances of the Israelites,

this result would have justified the highest encomiums of Balaam, and have verified the glowing language to which the rapt spirit of the Jewish lawgiver gave utterance, when just before his death he sang, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency?" Deut. xxxiii, 26-29.

This was the glorious destiny to which the children of Jacob were called, on being planted in the land of Canaan. To this all the promises and purposes of God concerning them tended. But this bright hope was blasted, and their strength paralyzed, by their faithlessness and idolatry.

It is, however, important to remember these Divine purposes, as means of accounting for the circumstances in which the Israelites were left at the death of Joshua. Some authors of note have speculated on the reasons which induced the son of Nun not to appoint a successor, as Moses had done; and others have spoken of this omission as a defect. It appears, on the contrary, that Joshua himself was appointed especially to the extraordinary work of subduing the land; and that, this being effected, any further appointment of a political head would have been an impeachment of the theocracy. Hence, when the people ultimately clamored for a king, God said unto Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." 1 Sam. viii, 7. According, therefore, to the nature of the theocracy, and the design of God in its establishment, the people were left, at the death of Joshua, in precisely the circumstances which, if they had been obedient, would have been most conducive to their happiness and prosperity, and also best adapted to display the Divine glory.

The opening of the Book of Judges seems to show, that the first recorded public proceedings which took place after the death of Joshua, were begun under the influence of the principles and convictions which the preceding remarks have pointed out, as suitable to the peculiar condition of the Israelites at that period. They had been commanded to complete the extermination of the Canaanites; and, therefore, "the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the

land into his hand." Judges i, 1, 2. Thus far Israel appears to have acted with perfect propriety, and with the fullest recognition of Jehovah, as their God and King: and He graciously replied to their inquiry, and accompanied this answer with a full assurance of their success in the contemplated enterprise. Yet, immediately afterwards, there is an indication of want of faith in the Divine word. Instead of promptly obeying the command of God, trusting in his promise, Judah invited Simeon to accompany him. This, however, did not mar the success of the expedition; they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites, and slew Adoni-bezek, a cruel tyrant who reigned in the mountains. It is also said, that they "fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire." Verse 8. But in the same chapter we are told, that "the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem." Verse 21. When, therefore, we know that the Jebusites retained possession of the stronghold of Zion until the time of David, it appears evident that the *taking* of Jerusalem, here spoken of, can mean no more than a successful attack on the city, and does not include the capture of the strongly fortified place belonging to it.

Caleb also went up to his lot, and drove out the inhabitants thereof, and took possession of it. After this successful enterprise was completed, Simeon, assisted by Judah, prosecuted the war in the district which had been assigned to him, and succeeded in taking Ascalon and Azotus from the Philistines. Yet, notwithstanding these successes, Judah could not expel the Canaanites from the low country, where their chariots gave them great advantage. Nor did Simeon succeed against all the cities of Philistia. Those who judge of these events by the common principles of human power and earthly policy, may regard "the chariots of iron," and the military prowess of the inhabitants of the land, as the *causes* of the only partial success of the Hebrews; but those who fully apprehend the duty and covenant-privilege of that people, will more correctly consider this state of things as the judicial *results* of their unbelief. It appears that this war was conducted with an imperfect faith, or the word of promise would have been fully verified. Various other military operations took place in the other tribes, respecting which very imperfect information is given; all, however, appear to have issued in advantage to Israel.

But the people shrank from the contest, and rather preferred dividing the land with the Heathen, to the laborious task of expelling them. This was a fearful disobedience of the covenant to which they stood pledged, and which, after a while, brought upon them the re-

proof and rebuke of Heaven: for, while they lay in this guilty supineness, the Angel of the Lord, who had so often appeared to Moses and Joshua, came up from Gilgal to Bochim, where, in all probability, some unusual assembly of the people was being held, and thus addressed them: "I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you." Judges ii, 1-3. This address clearly proves the guilty remissness of the Israelites; and the punishment which it threatens prepares us for the melancholy scenes which we are soon to contemplate. This apprehension is increased by the fact, that, although the people wept at the communication of the Angel, we hear of no fruits of repentance. They did not, as they ought to have done, arise, and inquire of the Lord what they should do, and how it should be done. But, on the contrary, after the death of "the elders that outlived Joshua," they "did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them." Verses 7, 11, 12.

The consequences of this conduct were rapidly developed in the moral and social deterioration of the people. They had neglected their duty, broken the solemn covenant into which they had entered with Jehovah, were grossly unfaithful to their religious privileges: instead of feeling the liveliest interest in maintaining the Divine honor, they sunk into the filthy abominations of idolatry; and thus, instead of displaying the greatness and glory of Jehovah, they practically declared that Baal and Ashtaroth were to be preferred before Him.

The first instance of this conduct which is presented to us in detail, is found in the history of Micah and his priest. Judges xvii. Here we have the introduction of idolatry plainly stated. Referring the reader to the sacred text, attention is called to the fact, that in this case the image does not appear to have been intended to represent any heathen deity. The silver had been dedicated to the Lord, (Jehovah,) to make a molten image. But then the man "had a house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest." Verse 5. Circumstances which are afterward detailed, show that Micah was enabled to procure a Levite for his priest. As it will be necessary, in another

chapter, to investigate the religious character of these proceedings, we here only mention their occurrence. It happened, however, that soon after this time the Danites, who found themselves greatly straitened in their lot, partly by its limited extent, and partly on account of the martial power of the Philistines and Amorites, who previously held most of their portion, sent out a small company to discover whether any more commodious settlement could be obtained elsewhere. These persons, in the course of their journey, lodged at the house of Micah, where they recognized the Levite, and ascertained his occupation. From thence, passing on toward the north, they found the city of Laish situated in a fine country, occupied by persons who lived in quiet and security, and unconnected with any powerful people or nation. They then returned, reported their discovery, when six hundred armed men were appointed to go and take possession of this new territory. In their journey, when crossing Mount Ephraim, the men who had gone to obtain information told their companions what they had seen in the house of Micah; upon which they went thither, and, intimating to the young Levite how much more honorable it would be for him to be a priest to a tribe in Israel than to a private family, they persuaded him to take the images, the ephod, and all the sacred furniture, and go with them. Micah followed, and remonstrated; but in vain. Being threatened, he returned, stripped of his priest and his gods. This expedition was successful. The Danites surprised and destroyed Laish, and afterward rebuilt the city, calling it after the name of their father, Dan. Here this idolatrous worship was set up, and continued to shed its malign influence on the people for many generations.

As far as it is possible to arrange the fragmentary narrative of the Book of Judges into chronological order, the next event which occurred in the public history of the Israelites exhibits a deterioration of morals even greater than might have been expected to result in a short space of time from this fearful religious apostasy.

A Levite residing in Mount Ephraim had taken a concubine from Bethlehem-Judah. The woman appears to have acted very improperly,—left her husband, and retired to her father's house, where she remained four months. After this lapse of time, the Levite, taking with him a servant and two asses, proceeded to Bethlehem, in order to fetch her back. He was kindly received by his wife's father, and remained with him several days; after which, with his wife and servant, he set out on his return home. They had come just opposite Jerusalem when the night set in, and the servants proposed that they should go in thither to lodge. The Levite, however, refused to go into the city of the Jebusites, and preferred going on farther, and

resting either at Ramah or Gibeah of Benjamin. The party arrived at the latter city; and as no one offered them entertainment, they remained for a while in the street. At length, a man returning from the field, who also was of Mount Ephraim, now sojourning at Gibeah, invited them to his house. The party, however, had only time to obtain refreshment, and had not retired to rest, when the inhabitants of the place gathered riotously about the house, in a manner worthy only of Sodom; nor would anything satisfy their violence, until the Levite, to avert the threatened evil, brought his concubine forth unto them. They took the woman and abused her in such a manner that in the morning she had just strength enough to return to the house where her husband lodged, when she died on the threshold. Here he found her, and, laying her dead body upon the ass, proceeded to his own house.

We need not wonder that in a case so flagrant as this, the Levite should have been roused to the highest pitch of suffering and excitement; but the mind is not prepared for the means to which he resorted in order to obtain revenge. This was such as might only be expected in the darkest age, and among the most barbarous people. He cut the body of the dead woman into twelve parts, and sent one of these, with the story of his woe, to each of the tribes. The result was such as he had hoped. The whole congregation of Israel met at Mizpeh; and, having heard the tale of the Levite, they sent messengers to Gibeah to demand that the perpetrators of this enormity might be given up to the punishment they deserved. The Benjamites refused to comply, and prepared to protect the criminals. This led to a most unnatural war. In the first two battles the men of Gibeah were victorious; in the third, they were not only vanquished, but the tribe of Benjamin was nearly exterminated. Amid all the darkness and guilt of these transactions, we find Jehovah still watching over his people, and teaching them, by the loss of the first two battles, the duty of fully asking counsel of Him. The terrible chastisement thus inflicted upon Benjamin induced the other tribes to relent, and take measures for preventing the entire ruin of this Hebrew house. (See *Appendix*, note 46.)

The instances of transgression by the Israelitish nation to which we have referred, are by no means solitary. The sacred writer informs us that their conduct was such that "the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them." Judges ii, 14. How unlike that which was designed by the merciful purpose of God! What a fearful contrast to the glory which the theocracy was intended to throw over this divinely selected land!

The first judicial infliction of political servitude which is recorded, arose out of the prevailing power of the king of Mesopotamia, Chushan-rishathaim, who ruled over Israel; and they served him eight years. (See *Appendix*, note 47.)

From this thralldom Israel was delivered by Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, who judged Israel forty years. This circumstance sufficiently fixes the chronology of this event.

The character of the authority which these extraordinary judges exercised, and its extent, are very doubtful.

"The Hebrew judges," says Dupin, "were not ordinary magistrates, but men raised up by God, on whom the Israelites bestowed the chief government, either because they had delivered them from the oppressions under which they groaned, or because of their prudence and approved probity. The judges ruled according to the laws of God; commanded their armies; made treaties with the neighboring princes; declared war and peace, and administered justice. They were different from kings, 1. In that they were not established by election or succession, but raised up in an extraordinary manner. 2. In that they refused to take upon them the title and quality of a king. 3. In that they levied no taxes on the people for the maintenance of government. 4. In their manner of living, which was very far from the ostentation and pomp of the regal state. 5. In that they could make no new laws, but governed according to the statutes contained in the books of Moses. 6. In that the obedience paid to them was voluntary and unforced; being, at most, no more than consuls and supreme magistrates of free cities."—*History of the Canon*, book i, chap. iii, sect. 3.

Calmet says, "The authority of the judges was not inferior to that of kings; it extended to peace and war. They decided causes with absolute authority; but they had no power to make new laws, nor to impose new burdens on the people. They were protectors of the laws, defenders of religion, and avengers of crimes, particularly of idolatry; they were without pomp or splendor, without guards, train, or equipage, unless their own wealth might enable them to appear answerable to their dignity. The revenue of their employment consisted in presents; they had no regular profits, and levied nothing from the people."—*Dictionary*, art. Judges.

The opinions of these learned men may give as correct an idea of the character and extent of the authority exercised by the judges as can now be expected; although we are of opinion that, when the reader has reviewed the whole subject, he will agree with us in thinking that this authority was exercised by some of the judges over a very limited territory, and not over all Israel; while others

of them, although mighty in the deliverance of the tribes from oppression; appear never to have exercised the vocation of rulers. There is, however, one feature of the case worthy of attention: these judges, or at least the principal ones, appear to have exercised a very salutary influence on the religious character of the people. Hence, after the death of Othniel, Ehud, and others, it is said, "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord." Judges iii, 12; iv, 1.

Thus it was after the death of the son of Kenaz; and the consequence is a striking commentary on the various interpositions of God in human affairs. We have the startling declaration, "The Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel. And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel," and not only subdued the eastern Israelites, but crossed the Jordan, and took a city which had been built near the site of Jericho, and therefore called the city of Palm-Trees. Judges iii, 12, 13. Here he established his residence: and it will be seen that the situation was very favorable for maintaining his authority over the larger portion of Canaan, and thus exacting the greatest amount of tribute, and of preserving, at the same time, a close communication with the countries of Ammon and Amalek. This servitude lasted eighteen years, and appears to have been very severe, when the Israelites, humbled and taught wisdom by affliction, cried unto God. And the Lord heard, and raised up a deliverer in the person of Ehud, a Benjamite, who, taking advantage of an opportunity offered in presenting the usual tribute, slew Eglon, and, gathering together a company, at once attacked the Moabites, and secured the fords of Jordan. By this means ten thousand Moabites were slain, and Israel was completely rescued from their domination. This victory gave rest to Israel eighty years.

We are next informed of the exploits of Shamgar, who repelled the incursions of the Philistines, and slew of them six hundred men with an ox-goad.

After the death of Ehud, Israel again relapsed into evil, and the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. It is certain that Joshua destroyed a king of this name, and burned his city, which was also called Hazor. But it appears that after the death of Joshua, this power had again risen up into great importance. Jabin, in all probability, was a name common to this line of kings; and it is likely that a descendant of the former sovereign now reigned. He mightily oppressed Israel, and his resources were very great; for Josephus says, that he had three hundred thousand footmen, ten thousand horse, and three thousand

chariots. We know he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and that his military forces were under the command of an able and experienced officer, Sisera, who was captain of his host.

During the latter part of this servitude, Israel was judged by a prophetess, named Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth, who sat under a palm-tree, between Ramah and Bethel: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment. Several of our eminent writers on Biblical history seem very anxious to have it believed, that this woman, although distinguished for wisdom, was not favored with any special Divine revelation. It is remarkable, that learned men, and even divines, are reluctant to admit the immediate interposition of God in the affairs of this world. Did not this woman know by Divine teaching, that Barak had received a message from God, and the purport of it? Did not she prophesy the certain defeat of Sisera, and that he should fall by the hand of a woman? And where shall we find the purity and power of inspiration, if it cannot be found in that sublime ode in which she celebrated the victory?

From the geographical situation of Hazor, it is evident that this scourge fell with the greatest severity on those tribes who lived in the northern parts of Canaan. The Lord having called Barak to deliver Israel from this tyrant, he consented to go, provided Deborah would accompany him. Barak, having collected together ten thousand men of Zebulun and Naphtali, went up, with his troop and Deborah, and took up his position on Mount Tabor. This being reported to Sisera, he brought all his army to invest the Mount; but Barak, encouraged by the prophetess, marched down, attacked, discomfited, and destroyed this immense host; Sisera himself being slain by Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, into whose tent he had fled for refuge and rest. Thus the Lord prospered Barak, until he had broken the power of the king of Canaan, and destroyed him. (See *Appendix*, note 48.)

To the magnificent ode by which Deborah and Barak celebrated this victory, we have already referred. Bishop Lowth calls this a "specimen of the perfectly sublime ode;" and it unquestionably furnishes a brilliant illustration of the cultivation and intellectual power which individual minds among the Hebrews possessed, even in the midst of external disorder and corruption.

The conquest of the Canaanites, thus wrought out by Jehovah, through the instrumentality of Deborah and Barak, gave the land rest forty years. But exemption from temporal suffering led to its usual consequences: the people again "did evil in the sight of the Lord;" and he gave them into the hand of the king of Midian. This people had been almost exterminated by the Israelites, by the special com-

mand of God, just before the death of Moses. The scattered fragments of the tribe had, however, again united and multiplied, and were now made the instruments of inflicting on their former conquerors a scourge as severe as any they had ever suffered.

The Israelites, at least the great body of the nation residing in the eastern and northern parts of the land, were completely subdued, and driven into "the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strongholds." Judges vi, 2. For the Midianites, having the Amalekites associated with them, came up in great numbers, and destroyed or carried off all the fruit of the land. So that if they ventured to cultivate any part of the soil, it was almost certain to be taken away by their cruel oppressors. This infliction lasted seven years, and, in consequence, all Israel was greatly impoverished, and the people cried unto the Lord.

It was during the scarcity occasioned by this incursion, that Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, with their two sons, driven by the pressure of the times, went to sojourn in the land of Moab, as detailed in the Book of Ruth.

As the tyranny of the Midianites was most grievous, so the means which the Lord devised to give his people deliverance were most remarkable. The reader will do well to refer to the Scripture narrative.

The Lord at first sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, who, in the name of Jehovah, recalled to their memory their deliverance from Egypt by Almighty power; the equally miraculous subjugation of the land of Canaan, which was given unto them; and the explicit command, which they had received to avoid being polluted with the idolatry of the land: a command which they had so fearfully violated.

This inspired messenger was followed by a more august visitation. The Angel Jehovah appeared unto Gideon, the Abiezrite, as he was secretly threshing corn, for fear of the Midianites; and announced unto him the Divine purpose, that he should deliver Israel out of the hand of Midian. Gideon shrank from the mighty task, and besought the messenger to show him a sign. He then hasted to his house, where he prepared a kid, and some cakes, and brought them to the place where the mysterious stranger sat. The Angel then commanded him to place the flesh upon a rock close by, and the cakes upon it, and then to pour the broth over them. He did so; and the Angel put forth his staff, and touched the provisions, when, lo, a fire arose out of the rock and consumed the kid and the cakes, while the Angel disappeared from his sight. At this marvelous appearance Gideon was greatly alarmed, but was immediately

reassured by a message of peace from Jehovah. Gideon therefore built an altar on the spot, and gave it a name significant of this gracious communication. Judges vi, 24.

The ensuing night another special revelation was made to Gideon, by which he was commanded to throw down the altar of Baal, and to destroy his grove, and to sacrifice unto Jehovah. This he did at once; which so enraged the men of the city, that they gathered about his father's house, and demanded that he might be brought out and put to death. His father Joash, however, who appears to have been convinced of the divine mission of his son, boldly met the demand, by challenging the deity of Baal, saying, "Will ye plead for Baal? Will ye save him? If he be a god, let him plead for himself. Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal." Verses 31, 32.

From the scope of the narrative, it appears probable that these extraordinary doings had attracted attention, and that the dominant powers were determined, by an overwhelming force, to crush any attempt which the Israelites might make to obtain deliverance. For, immediately after noticing the preceding events, the inspired writer proceeds to say, "Then all the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel." Judges vi, 33. Much obscurity rests upon this part of the history, from the fact that Biblical critics have not been able to determine the geography of Ophrah, where Gideon dwelt; not even so far as to ascertain whether it lay on the east or the west side of Jordan, as one-half of the tribe of Manasseh lay on either side of the river. But, from the fact that the confederate forces assembled in the valley of Jezreel, which lay in the portion of Issachar, close to the lot of Manasseh, on the west side of Jordan, it may be safely presumed that Gideon resided in this neighborhood.

The crisis having now arrived, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him." Judges vi, 34. He then sent messengers to the neighboring tribes; and his call was so promptly responded to, that he soon found himself at the head of thirty-two thousand men, gathered together from Manasseh, Asher, Naphtali, and Zebulun. But, although he was thus earnest in calling others to enter upon this enterprise, his own heart still doubted; he therefore entreated the Lord to show him a further token, in confirmation of his promise. Jehovah condescended to his request; and the miracle of the fleece of wool dissipated his doubts, and confirmed his faith. Verses 36-40.

Gideon then conducted his army to the attack; but after he had

taken up his position, the Lord told him that his force was too numerous; that the people, in the event of success, would attribute it to their own valor. He therefore commanded Gideon to announce to the assembled host, that all who were fearful and afraid might return. This license at once reduced the army to ten thousand men, twenty-two thousand having returned to their homes. But even this limited number the Lord pronounced to be too great; and the ten thousand were led down to the water-side, and Gideon was commanded to select those only who adopted a very peculiar manner of drinking. This brought down to three hundred the number of men to be actually engaged in the attack. Gideon, having sent away all but these, and having his faith still further confirmed by a visit in the night to the Midianitish camp, divided his three hundred men into three companies, and gave each man in one hand a lighted lamp, which was placed within a pitcher, and a trumpet in the other. They were thus enabled, without exciting observation, to approach close to each side of the camp; when, at a preconcerted signal, they all sounded their trumpets, and brake the pitchers, which exposed the full light of the lamps, and shouted, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!" The light and noise roused the sleeping host, who, seeing themselves thus encompassed, fled in wild disorder and dismay; and, as the night prevented them from distinguishing friends from foes, and "the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow," the slaughter was immense; while Gideon, taking advantage of the disorder, commanded his friends to seize the fords of Jordan. Oreb and Zeeb, two princes of Midian, fell in this rout; but Gideon, determined to destroy the power of his foes, halted not, but crossed the Jordan, and at length succeeded in surprising Zebah and Zalmunna, who, with fifteen thousand men, were in Karkor, destroyed their host, and took the kings alive. But afterward, finding that they had destroyed his brethren, he slew them.

Returning from this victory, he severely chastised the men of Succoth and Penuel, who had refused refreshment to his troops, in their pursuit of the Midianitish host, and then returned to Ophrah. This great deliverance produced such an effect on the Israelites, that they gathered around Gideon, and requested him to take upon himself the supreme government of the country; offering at the same time to make it hereditary in his family. His reply is remarkable: "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you," Judges viii, 23: language which shows that, in his opinion, the theocracy was incompatible with a political head, or ruler, over the whole land.

Yet the man who was thus highly honored of God in delivering

his people from oppression, and who appears to have refused the sovereignty from religious motives, asked and received from the people, as his share of the booty, the golden ear-rings which had been taken from the Midianites, and therewith made an ephod, which became a snare unto the people, and led them into idolatry. Nevertheless, the land had rest all the days of Gideon, even forty years.

It was soon after this deliverance had been effected that Naomi, having lost her husband and her sons in the land of Moab, and hearing that the Lord had visited his people, in giving them bread, returned, with Ruth, her daughter-in-law, unto Bethlehem-Judah.

The death of Gideon produced the first ambitious effort to grasp illegitimate political power which we meet with in the history of the Hebrew people. This judge, having had several wives, left seventy legitimate sons; and, besides these, another, named Abimelech, born unto him by a concubine, a woman of Shechem. This aspiring young man, affected probably by the offers of sovereignty which his father had refused, and, at the same time, dreading the stronger claims of his legitimate brethren, took advantage of his maternal connection with the men of Shechem, enlisted their sympathies in his behalf, and by their aid succeeded in destroying all the seventy sons of his father, except the youngest, who hid himself, and escaped. The men of Shechem, who had lent themselves to promote this guilty object, consummated it by declaring Abimelech king.

We owe to this circumstance the possession of perhaps the oldest apologue extant. Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon, who had escaped amid the massacre of his brethren, stood on Mount Gerizim, and, calling to the men of Shechem, addressed them in the words of the very ingenious fable to which we have referred, and which clearly shows that, even in those rude and disorderly times, some men were adepts in the art of elegant composition.

The reign of Abimelech lasted three years, and its termination was as inglorious as its beginning was atrocious. The men of Shechem became weary of their new sovereign, resisted his authority, but were vanquished and destroyed. While, however, Abimelech was storming the tower of Thebez, the inhabitants of which had also rebelled, a woman cast a piece of a mill-stone on his head, and he died. This man is not to be reckoned as one of the judges: they were specially raised up by God, or called to their office by the voice of the people in a great emergency; but Abimelech was a wicked and ambitious usurper.

Tola, of the tribe of Issachar, next judged Israel; but we have no account of his actions or times, except that he ruled twenty-three years.

Jair, a Gileadite, succeeded him. Of this judge, also, we have no information, except that which refers to his family, and the ostentation they displayed. Judges x, 4. He was the first person called to this high office from the tribes which dwelt to the east of Jordan. He judged Israel twenty-two years.

After this period Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord; and he raised up against them two powerful enemies from opposite parts of the country,—the Ammonites on the east, and the Philistines on the west. As the religious defection of this time was greater than on any preceding occasion, the idolatry of the people having become so general that they worshiped “Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord, and served not him;” so the number and power of their oppressors were doubled. Judges x, 6–10.

There is great obscurity in the sacred account of the duration of this servitude, which has given rise to very conflicting views of the chronology of the period: it is, however, certain, that the oppression was severe, and constrained the people again to cry unto the Lord. And the Lord, we are told, expostulated with them on account of their numerous idolatries, and directed them to seek for refuge unto the false gods which they had worshiped. “Go,” said he, “and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.” Judges x, 14. Of the medium of this communication, whether by a prophet or otherwise, we are not informed.

Compelled by the urgent necessities of their condition, when the Israelites saw the army of Ammon encamped in Gilead, they united themselves together, and pitched in Mizpeh. But the tribes were without a leader: no man among them seemed possessed of the requisite talents, courage, and experience, for this onerous task: and yet, exposed as they were to a martial and disciplined power, such a leader was indispensable. In this emergency, their attention was turned to Jephthah, who was known to be a mighty man of valor. He was of the family of Gilead; but his mother being a Gentile woman, when he grew up his brethren would not allow him to share their father’s inheritance with them, and drove him away. Upon this he appears to have gathered to himself a few lawless young men, and retired with them to the land of Tob, where he lived in a manner that had given his name great celebrity for deeds of daring and martial prowess. To him, therefore, the elders of Israel sent some of their number, inviting him to return, and take upon himself the conduct of the war. Jephthah, after rebuking the unfeeling man-

ner in which he had been treated, inquired whether it was their settled purpose to reward him with the chief magistracy, provided he listened to their request, and was successful in the war. "If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head?" To this they consented, and Jephthah went with the elders, and the people made him head and captain over them; and from the tenor of the text, it appears that the covenant which had been previously made in Tob, was renewed again between him and the elders of the people, "before the Lord in Mizpeh." Judges xi, 9-11.

After this preparation, either to gain time, or to make the cause of the war fully apparent, Jephthah sent messengers to the king of Ammon, and opened negotiations with him. These, however, produced no good result, and the Hebrew chief commended the justice of his cause to the Lord. Judges xi, 14-28. Thus far the arrangement between the elders and Jephthah, and his conduct afterwards, as far as our information extends, were merely the result of human wisdom and political prudence. But now the Lord interposes on behalf of his people. We are told, "Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah;"* he marched to the attack; and his campaign was a succession of brilliant conquests. He smote the children of Ammon, who were subdued before him, even twenty cities. Verses 29-32.

On his victorious return unto Gilead, the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and threatened to burn him and his house with fire, because he had not called them to the war, pouring upon his family epithets of great contempt. Jephthah then gathered his forces together, fought with this unreasonable band of Israelites, and, having defeated them, and taken the fords of Jordan, to cut off their retreat, he detected all those of the tribe of Ephraim by their pronunciation of the word *shibboleth*, the first syllable of which they could not correctly enunciate; and thus there fell of the sons of Ephraim forty-two thousand men.

This fact proves that the authority of all the judges did not extend to the whole of the tribes of Israel. It is not probable that the authority of Jephthah was ever acknowledged on the west side of the Jordan. He ruled six years.

After the death of Jephthah, we read of three other judges; but of these we know little more than their names:—

Ibzan, of Bethlehem, who judged Israel seven years.

Elon, of Zebulun, who ruled ten years.

* The case of Jephthah's daughter, and her fate, will be discussed in the chapter on the religion of this period.

Abdon, the son of Hillel, who judged Israel eight years.

The painful announcement once more meets us, that "Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years." Judges xiii, 1. The inspired writer then proceeds to state, that the Angel of the Lord appeared unto a woman of the tribe of Dan, the wife of Manoah, who as yet had been childless, and assured her that she should bear a son; that he was destined to be a Nazarite unto God from his mother's womb; and that he should begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines. The Angel at the same time cautioned the woman that she was not to drink wine, or strong drink, nor to eat any unclean thing.

The woman having reported this strange occurrence to her husband, he entreated the Lord that he also might be favored with a similar visit, and have further information respecting the promised child. He was gratified. The Angel again appeared to the woman, and she ran and called her husband. In reply to the inquiries of Manoah, the Angel repeated the injunctions he had previously given to his wife, and then acted much in the same manner as the Angel did which appeared unto Gideon. He refused to eat; but when, at his suggestion, Manoah had prepared "a kid with a meat-offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord, the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the Angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground." Judges xiii, 19, 20.

Manoah felt greatly alarmed; but his wife encouraged him to rest on the truth of the promise they had received, and which was in due time verified; for "the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him." Verse 24.

No part of this difficult book is more perplexing than that which portrays the life and conduct of this most remarkable man. Bishop Russel has well said, that "his character presents more points which it is almost impossible to reconcile with the notion of a theocratic government, and of a divine commission, than any Hebrew ruler, either before or after him. In no other instance do we find it so difficult to trace an affinity between the action and the motive, between the private conduct and the official authority."—*Connection*, vol. i, p. 496. Nor is this our only difficulty; the chronology of Samson's life and actions is very obscure, and has called forth many conflicting opinions. Having given the subject very close and care-

ful attention, we decidedly prefer the arrangement of the bishop of Glasgow, that "the servitudes were successive, and that none of the judges were contemporary, except Eli and Samson, during a part of their administrations."—*Connection*, vol. i, p. 506. These principles will lead to an arrangement of events best calculated to accord with a reasonable interpretation of the sacred record, Josephus, and other authorities.

As our limits preclude the possibility of our discussing the various topics which a curious inquirer will find in the case of Samson, we shall confine ourselves to a rapid sketch of his principal actions, accompanied by such brief remarks as may appear necessary.

The first circumstance recorded of the son of Manoah is his marriage. He went down to Timnath, and saw a woman, a daughter of a Philistine: and he at once requested his parents to procure her for his wife. They objected, not knowing that this attachment was "of the Lord." But Samson persisted in his object; and in one of his visits, being assailed by a lion in the way, "the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand." Judges xiv, 6. After awhile, on another visit, passing that way, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and found that a swarm of bees had taken up their abode and deposited their honey in it, of which he took some in his hands, and went on eating. The marriage took place, and the Philistines brought thirty companions to be with him. At the feast, the bridegroom propounded a riddle to the company, stating, that, if they could solve it within the seven days of the feast, he would give them thirty sheets and thirty changes of raiment; but that, if they failed, then he would expect from them such a present. It was thus given: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." Verse 14.

The Philistines in vain endeavored to unravel the meaning of this enigma; upon which they addressed the wife, and, covertly charging her with conspiring to defraud them, threatened in case of her non-compliance to burn her with fire. Stung with this reproach, she became importunate with her husband; and having obtained the secret, told it to her friends. They at once gave Samson his answer, saying, "What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?" To which Samson rejoined, "Nothing is more deceitful than a woman; for such was the person that discovered my interpretation to you."—*Josephus, Ant.*, b. v, ch. viii, sec. 6. He then proceeded to Askelon, where he slew thirty Philistines, and, taking their raiment, gave it to the persons who had answered his enigma. Being

very angry on account of this circumstance, he went up to his father's house.

Some time after this, he again went down to the house of his wife's father, and found that she had been given to the man who had acted as his friend at the marriage. This still more irritated the spirit of Samson; and he thenceforward thought himself justified in making any aggression upon the Philistines. He therefore caught three hundred foxes, and, tying them together, put a fire-brand between every two tails, and sent them into the midst of the standing corn of the Philistines, and thus burnt up both the shocks and the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives. When the oppressors of Israel ascertained who was the author of this calamity, they went to the house of his wife, and burnt her and her father's dwelling with fire; whereupon the enraged Nazarite attacked a body of the Philistines, and "smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter." Judges xv, 8. Afterwards, expecting to be pursued by his foes, he went down and took up his post on the top of the rock Etam. This was a strong place in the tribe of Judah, to the summit of which but one man could go at the same time. Samson, therefore, was here invincible.

The Philistines, determined to avenge the outrages which they had received, assembled themselves, and encamped at Lehi in Judah. The Israelites, unable to meet them in war, expostulated with them; but they insisted on having Samson given up to them; upon which three thousand men of Judah went down to Etam, and complained that he had brought them into great and unnecessary trouble. "And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines." Verse 12. Samson heard this unmoved, and was only solicitous to extort an oath from them, that they would not fall upon him themselves. "And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee." Verse 13. He then submitted to their hands, and they bound him, and brought him up from the rock. But no sooner had he approached the Philistine camp, and heard them shouting at the prospect of possessing him as their prisoner, than the Spirit of God came mightily upon him, he burst the cords from his hands, and, finding no other weapon, laid hold on the jaw-bone of an ass, which he found in his way, and with it assailed the host of the Philistines, and slew a thousand men.

In this, as in the other instances of the miraculous prowess of this judge, it is worthy of observation, that he acted alone. Here we find him assail and rout an army; yet there is not the slightest evi-

dence that any of his countrymen seconded his efforts. Three thousand men could assemble to deliver him up to their enemies; but, as far as our information extends, they dared not aid him in destroying the routed foes of their country. This fact is a curious commentary upon the prophetic declaration respecting Samson: "He shall *begin* to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines." Judges xiii, 5. The public spirit of his countrymen appears at this time to have been so completely prostrated, that none were prepared to second him. His heroism, therefore, was only a *beginning* of their deliverance.

After this conflict, Samson was sorely oppressed by thirst, and cried unto the Lord, who miraculously supplied him with water. The account of this supply has given rise to much verbal criticism, especially as in our authorized version it is said, "God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout." Judges xv, 19. We need not wonder that such a text has given rise to much speculation. Bochart contends that one of the large teeth had been shook out, and that the water was made to flow from the vacant socket. Usher urges that it was brought from some hollow in the earth; and Josephus maintains that it was made to flow out of a rock.

The real difficulty in this case arises from the fact that the term *Lehi* is used to signify the name of the place, as well as the bone. We think, therefore, the conclusion of the venerable primate the most reasonable: "In which place, called *Lehi* from that jaw-bone, God, at the prayer of Samson, opened a hole in the earth, and made it a fountain, called *En-haccore*, 'The fountain of him which called upon God.'"—*Usher's Annals*, p. 82, fol. 1644.

Afterwards Samson went down to Gaza, which the Philistines had again recovered from Israel, to the house of a harlot. Some writers have endeavored to explain away what appears objectionable in the English reading of this incident, by urging that in the Hebrew the same term is applied both to the female keeper of an inn and to an unchaste woman. The account of Josephus accords with the most charitable construction of the passage; for he says, "After this fight Samson held the Philistines in contempt, and came to Gaza, and took his lodgings at a certain inn."—*Ant.*, b. v, ch. viii, sec. 10. But whatever might have been the character of the place where he lodged, his coming was soon noised abroad, and the inhabitants were determined, if possible, to terminate his aggressions with his life. They therefore carefully closed the gate of the city, set a watch, and waited until the morning, that they might put their design into execution. But Samson "arose at midnight, and took the doors of the

gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them; bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of a hill that is before Hebron." Judges xvi, 3. The effect of this astonishing feat of strength upon his enemies may be conceived.

But Samson only avoided one danger to fall into a greater. Our next information of him states, "that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah." Verse 4. As this place lay about midway between Gath and Kirjath-jearim, it was just on the confines of Philistia and Israel. We cannot, therefore, ascertain from the place, whether this woman was an Israelite or a Philistine, although from her conduct the latter is more probable. "The lords of the Philistines" were no sooner informed of this unhappy connection, than they resolved to employ the deceitful woman as the instrument of his destruction; promising her a large sum of money, should she succeed in enabling them to take possession of his person. Josephus tells us that she began her evil work by flattering the pride of her victim, and by extolling his wonderful exploits; expressing, at the same time, the utmost curiosity to know wherein his astonishing prowess consisted, and by what means he had attained a degree of strength so much exceeding that of other men. The evasions to which he had recourse prove at once his weakness, and his apprehension of the snares with which he saw himself surrounded. He first sacrificed truth, and then religion. In the commencement of his troubles he relinquished personal honor; and he ended by abjuring his profession as a person dedicated to Heaven. He broke the vow of his Nazaritism; and from that moment his great strength went from him. He allowed the razor to come upon his head, and he instantly became weak, and was like any other man. "And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, 'I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass.'" Verses 20, 21.

Having thus obtained possession of their hated enemy, and forever shrouded him in darkness, the Philistines doomed him to the vilest indignity: they shut him up in prison, where he was compelled to grind corn, the usual employment of slaves. The humiliation and suffering which the Hebrew hero was thus doomed to endure was not a sufficient gratification for the pride and exultation of the Philistines. The lords of this people, intoxicated with their success, appointed a great sacrifice in the house of Dagon, their god; "for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us." Verse 24.

But, while engaged in the festivities of this service, it occurred to them that the presence of Samson would add to the interest of the scene. He was accordingly brought from the prison to minister to their mirth.

Before this time, however, his hair had again grown; and with it his extraordinary strength had in some measure returned. The building in which the immense concourse of Philistines were assembled, appears to have been uncovered in the centre; so that the three thousand men and women who were standing on the roof, could see what was taking place in the area below, the superstructure being supported by pillars. Samson, conscious of his degradation, earnestly prayed to God for help, and entreated the lad who led him to direct his hands to the pillars, under the pretense of his wishing to lean upon them. Having thus got the two centre pillars of the building, the one in his right hand, and the other in his left, he prayed, and, exerting all his strength, wrested them from their position. Thus deprived of support, "the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death, were more than they which he slew in his life." Verse 30. Then his brethren and the house of his father came down, and carried up the body, and buried it in the burying-place of Manoah, between Zorah and Eshtaol. The destruction of life occasioned by Samson at his death, falling, as there appears every reason to believe it did, upon the flower of the Philistine nation, must for a while, at least, have paralyzed their national energy. Samson had judged Israel twenty years.

We have already intimated our opinion, that Samson lived in the time of Eli: according to the chronological arrangement which is here adopted, they began their official career about the same time. Eli, who was the high priest, appears to have exercised a judicial oversight over the civil government of the people; while the son of Manoah, during his erratic course, and especially at its close, inflicted severe chastisement on the oppressors of Israel.

About two or three years before Samson entered upon his public course, another divine interposition took place, which in its results was not very unlike that which preceded his own birth. Elkanah, a Levite of Mount Ephraim, had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah: the latter had children; but Hannah was barren. This was not only in itself a severe affliction to Hannah, but exposed her to the taunts and reproaches of Peninnah. In these circumstances the afflicted woman, on one of the annual visits of the family to the tabernacle at Shiloh, took occasion to make earnest and importunate prayer to God, that he would remove her reproach. Her earnestness of man-

ner and peculiarity of appearance attracted the notice of Eli, who reproved her, supposing she was drunken; but, having been undeceived, he joined in her prayer, that God would grant her request; and Hannah vowed, that if her prayer was answered, she would faithfully dedicate the child to God. Her prayer was heard. The son was born; and, the days of his infancy having passed away, Hannah brought Samuel to Eli, and solemnly devoted him to the divine service. Even in the very brief narration of these events, we cannot pass over the splendid effusion in which Hannah recorded her grateful sense of the divine mercy. It indicates not only deep piety, but refined taste, and great poetic ability; and shows, that when Israel as a nation was in the most rude condition, and in a state bordering on social and political disorganization, there were, even then, and in humble life, minds of the first order, not only rich in native genius, but elevated and ornamented by great cultivation. We may have to notice this admirable hymn elsewhere, on account of its religious predictions:—we here call attention to prophecies which it contains of a temporal character. Hannah predicts her future fruitfulness, 1 Sam. ii, 7; (she had five other children;) she foretels the judgments of God upon the enemies of Israel, verse 10; and even describes the means by which they should be inflicted. Compare verse 10 with vii, 10.

Eli, though he appears to have been a good man, was very deficient as a public magistrate. His sons, whose position was prominent and influential, from their relation to the high priest and supreme judge, were nevertheless exceedingly wicked. Their sordid exactions infringed the law, reflected great dishonor upon God, and brought the priestly office into contempt; while the vices of their private conduct were so flagrant, that they polluted the tabernacle and demoralized the people. Their father, who was aware of their evil doings, administered nothing but a very mild and utterly ineffectual reproof. In those circumstances, God himself undertook the matter, and sent a prophet to Eli, who placed before him the calling of the family of Aaron to the priesthood, its object, and responsibilities; showed in vivid terms the extent of the prevailing corruption, and denounced the ruin of his family; and especially the death of his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, on the same day. Yet this divine warning did not lead them to repentance. The message was, however, in mercy, repeated.* Samuel being at the time, according

*It is surprising that Mr. Townsend, in his excellent "Chronological Arrangement of the Scriptures," should have placed the second chapter of the First Book of Samuel after the third, and thus have made the revelation to Samuel prior to the message of the prophet, although the reverse is manifest from chap. iii, 12.

to Josephus, about twelve years of age, was lying in the sacred tent, when the Lord called him by his name; and he, thinking it was Eli, as no other person was present, ran to the high priest to inquire what he wanted. This having been repeated, Eli, at length, supposing that the Lord had spoken to him, told him, if he heard the voice again, to reply, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." 1 Sam. iii, 9. He obeyed, and the Lord repeated to him the threatening which he had previously denounced against the house of Eli. In the morning, the high priest inquired of Samuel the purport of the communication, and, on hearing the doom of his family repeated, he resignedly said, "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good." Verse 18.

From this time the Lord communicated his will to Samuel. "And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord." Verses 19-21.

As the judicial administration of Samuel stands so intimately connected with the establishment of monarchy, we shall reserve our notice of its proceedings to the next chapter.

Although the divine communications made to the young prophet seemed to indicate a promise of better days for Israel, subsequent events showed that the chosen people of the Lord had not yet sunk into the lowest depth of humiliation and distress.

The Philistines, recovering from the panic, which was induced by the loss they sustained at the death of Samson, and finding, in all probability, that their authority had in some instances been questioned, gathered themselves together against Israel. The descendants of Jacob still possessed spirit enough to meet their foes in the field. But the Philistines prevailed, and Israel fled before them. In order, if possible, to repair this disaster, they sent for the ark of God from Shiloh, which, accompanied by Hophni and Phinehas, was brought to the camp, and received by the people with acclamations of joy.

Intelligence of this movement spread consternation and dismay among the Philistines. They remembered the mighty works which the Lord had done in Egypt and in the wilderness, and they trembled, lest their fate should be similar. Roused by this danger, they encouraged themselves to the most desperate efforts, again attacked the army of Israel, and again prevailed. Sin had separated the chosen people from the protecting power of God. Thirty

thousand Israelites fell dead on the field, Hophni and Phinehas were slain, and the ark of God was carried into captivity by the heathen.

Information of this terrible calamity was brought to Eli, as he sat by the way, blind, and waiting with great anxiety the issue of the contest. When he heard of the death of his sons, and of the capture of the ark, "he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died." 1 Sam. iv, 18. As we shall show that the administration of Samuel was clearly preparative to the establishment of monarchy, we regard this adversity as the condition to which Israel had been gradually sinking, notwithstanding many gracious interpositions of Divine Power, throughout the whole period of their residence in Canaan.

This (if we may use such language) was the result of the grand experiment of the theocracy. God having delivered the descendants of Jacob out of Egyptian bondage, and manifested on their behalf in the wilderness the greatness of his power, brought their children, who had been trained up under the constant guidance of his presence, and fed by his daily miracles, into the land which he had promised them. Here he subdued every power before them, gave them the high places of the land, and opened up to them a career of the most glorious happiness and prosperity. But it was his purpose that, in this course, their piety should be the basis of their power. He avowed himself at once their God and their King, enjoined obedience, and promised unbounded success. But they were disobedient, and consequently lost the blessings of his covenant-mercy. Instead, therefore, of rising up under the plenary influence of divine power, and displaying to all the nations of the earth a holy, happy, and invincible people, who derived all their advantage and glory, not from human prowess and political institutions, but from the faithfulness and truth of Jehovah, we find them trampled upon, and tyrannized over, by the vilest tribes of mankind. Joshua had fearful forebodings of this dire result, even in his day. "Ye cannot," said he, "serve the Lord: for he is a holy God." Joshua xxiv, 19. The man of God did not mean to assert the absolute impossibility of the thing, but their want of moral qualification for this service. Instead of rising into holiness, they sank into idolatry; and hence, notwithstanding repeated miraculous interpositions, they are found at length in slavish subjection to a heathen power,—the ark of God's covenant in a heathen temple, and a necessity created for molding their political constitution into another form, in order to save them as a people from total ruin.

It will now be necessary to give a chronological arrangement of the events reviewed in this chapter:—

		B. C.
The Israelites passed the Jordan.....		1568
Termination of the war, first division of lands, and setting up of the tabernacle.....	7 years	1561
Second division of lands.....		
Death of Joshua and elders.....	18 —	1543
Anarchy. In which took place the war with the Benjamites, and the idolatry of Micah.....	2 —	1541
FIRST SERVITUDE, under Cushan-rishathaim	8 —	1533
Othniel, judge.....	40 —	1493
SECOND SERVITUDE, under the Moabites.....	18 —	1475
Ehud and Shamgar, judges.....	80 —	1395
THIRD SERVITUDE, under the Canaanites.....	20 —	1375
Deborah and Barak, judges.....	40 —	1335
FOURTH SERVITUDE, under the Midianites.....	7 —	1328
Elimelech and Naomi sojourn in the land of Moab.....		
Gideon, judge.....	40 —	1288
Naomi and Ruth return.....		
Abimelech.....	3 —	1285
Tola.....	22 —	1263
Jair.....	22 —	1241
FIFTH SERVITUDE, under the Ammonites.....	18 —	1223
Jephthah, judge.....	6 —	1217
Ibzan.....	7 —	1210
Samson born.....		
Elon, judge.....	10 —	1200
Abdon.....	8 —	1192
SIXTH SERVITUDE, under the Philistines.....		
Samuel born two years before the expiration of the sixth servitude		
Samson and Eli, judges the last twenty years of this time....	40 —	1152
Eli, judge afterward.....	20 —	1132
SEVENTH SERVITUDE, or anarchy	20 7 m.	1111
Samuel, judge.....		
When Saul was anointed king.....	12 —	1099
	468 7	

This arrangement accords exactly with the chronology of Josephus, who makes it five hundred and ninety-two years from the exodus to the building of Solomon's temple, which is thus shown:—

From the exodus to the passing over Jordan.....	40 years.
From passing the Jordan to the accession of Saul, 468 years 7 months current.....	469 —
Reign of Saul.....	40 —
David.....	40 —
Solomon before the temple was begun.....	3 —
	592 years.

The numbers, as they stand in the preceding table, not only accord with Josephus, but also with the entire current of Scripture, (except the corrupted text of 1 Kings vi, 1,) and agree with the computation

of Jackson down to the time when Samuel entered upon his judicial course. But for the subsequent dates, as they are given above, we are indebted to the profound researches of Bishop Russel, who suggested allowing the twelve years for Samuel's official life between the twenty-one years' anarchy and the accession of Saul, and thus relieved the subject from the embarrassment in which the learned labors of Jackson had left it.

But as every reader of Biblical history is aware that, instead of five hundred and ninety-two years, Archbishop Usher assigns to this period only four hundred and eighty years, in accordance with the text to which we have referred, it is necessary to observe that the above account not only rests on the authority of Josephus, Clement of Alexandria, and other ancient writers, but is also sustained by the general scope of Holy Scripture. St. Paul, for instance, states that from the division of the land to the administration of Samuel was four hundred and fifty years, with which statement our table exactly agrees, while it frees the narrative from the greatest difficulties to which it is otherwise exposed. "According to Usher, Petavius, Capellus, and most other chronologers, who omit the seventh servitude, and the twelve years of Samuel's judicature prior to the nomination of Saul, the prophet became a judge at thirteen; was a gray-headed man, and had sons fit to assist him in his office before he was twenty-three; and, finally, died at an advanced age about the time he completed his fiftieth year!"—*Russel's Connexion*, vol. i, p. 153.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HISTORY OF THE HEBREW PEOPLE FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MONARCHY TO THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.

SAMUEL RECOGNIZED AS A PROPHET—His Administration and Efforts to instruct and improve the People—The miraculous Rout of the Philistines—Samuel in his old Age assisted by his Sons—Their Sin—THE ELDERS ASK A KING—The Causes of this Application—The Request is granted, and Saul anointed—Jabesh-Gilead delivered—Saul confirmed in the Kingdom—War with the Philistines—Saul's Impatience and Transgression—He is threatened—Heroism and Success of Jonathan—The King again acts unwisely—Saul commanded to destroy the Amalekites—He is victorious, but again transgresses, and is assured that he shall be deprived of the Kingdom—David privately anointed—Saul's mental Malady—He is relieved by David's Music—David made the King's Armor-bearer—War with the Philistines renewed—Goliath's Defiance—David kills the Giant—Saul, jealous of David's Fame, persecutes him—The Friendship of David and Jonathan—David flies to the Philistines—The increasing Distress of Saul—His Death—THE RETURN AND ACCESSION OF DAVID—David anointed King of Judah in Hebron—Death of Ishbosheth—David anointed King over all Israel—Jerusalem taken and made the Capital—Great Success of David in all his military Enterprises—The Kingdom delivered from all internal Enemies—And the neighboring States subdued—David's Sin in the Case of Bathsheba and Uriah—His Punishment denounced—The Wickedness of Amnon—He is slain—Absalom banished—But afterward pardoned—His Conspiracy—David flies—Absalom obtains the Capital—His Conduct—He is slain—The Return of the King—Rebellion of Sheba—The Kingdom saved by Joab—The People numbered—The consequent Pestilence—The last Days of David—His Death—THE STATE OF THE HEBREW KINGDOM AT THE CLOSE OF DAVID'S REIGN—ACCESSION OF SOLOMON—Piety and Wisdom—He begins to build the Temple—The Greatness of the Work—Its Enormous expense—The Fabric completed and dedicated—SOLOMON'S COMMERCIAL POLICY—Palmyra—Baalbec—Extensive inland Trade—Maritime Commerce—Ophir—The Queen of Sheba's Visit—Solomon's Riches—His unbounded Luxury and State—His numerous Wives and Concubines—His Apostasy—The awful Extent of his Idolatries—Jeroboam informed by a Prophet that he shall reign over ten Tribes—The Death of Solomon—And Accession of Rehoboam—His Folly—THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM—Brief Review of the Reign of Solomon—National Consequences of his Sin.

It has been shown in the preceding pages, that, even before the death of Eli, Samuel was established as a prophet of God in Israel, and that he was recognized as such from Dan to Beersheba. It is also probable that at this time he took some active part in public affairs; for the account of the battle of Eben-ezer is introduced with the remark, "And the word of Samuel came to all Israel." 1 Sam. iv, 1. After that calamitous conflict, the ark of God, which was taken by the Philistines, was carried to Ashdod, and placed in the temple of Dagon. Here, however, it was soon proved that the defeat and humiliation of Israel had not been occasioned by any want of power, or lack of watchful care, on the part of Jehovah. Having punished the wickedness of his people, he now interposed to maintain his own honor, and to assert his Divine supremacy. The sacred

ark, when placed in the idol temple, was not unaccompanied by the presence and power of Him to whose service it had been consecrated. In the morning, when the Philistines came early to the sacred place, probably to celebrate the praises of their idol, and exult over the capture of the ark, lo, Dagon had fallen prostrate before the ark. Supposing this might have been accidental, they set the image again in his place; but their hopes were vain: when they returned on the morrow, they found Dagon fallen again, with his head and hands cut off, only his stump being left. Nor was this the only infliction they were doomed to suffer. God smote the men of Ashdod with a sore disease; and punished them so severely, as to lead them to resolve that the ark of the God of Israel should not remain with them. Thence, therefore, it was taken to Gath. Here, also, dire affliction fell upon the people, which, unable to bear, they hoped to avert by taking the ark to Ekron. But the inhabitants of this city, warned by what had taken place, refused to receive it, saying, "They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people." 1 Sam. v, 10. This deep and general conviction of the irresistible power of Jehovah induced a serious deliberation on the subject. All the lords of the Philistines met together, and ultimately determined to send back the ark to the land of Israel. This was resolved upon; for they said, "That it slay us not, and our people: for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there." Verse 11.

In consequence of this determination, the ark was sent back to the Israelites, after it had been with the Philistines about seven months. The manner in which this was done is worthy of notice. Smarting under what they fully believed to be the judicial inflictions of the God of Israel, the Philistine lords decided on sending a trespass-offering with the ark, in humble acknowledgment of their sin and subjection, and in the hope that their plagues would be removed. But, while this was very carefully done, they at the same time felt anxious to have further proof that a supernatural power attended this sacred ark; and they therefore made their arrangements for its removal with great caution and ingenuity. Having made a new cart, and placed the ark with the trespass-offering upon it, they took two milch cows which had never previously been yoked, and, confining their calves at home, tied them to the cart, and left them to take their own way. The result afforded a complete answer to all their doubts. In defiance of all the instincts of their nature, these untrained animals quietly took the direct way toward the borders of Israel, and, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, they tarried not until they had crossed the frontier, and safely taken the ark to Beth-

shemesh. The Israelites, who were here engaged in reaping the wheat-harvest, when they saw the ark, rejoiced greatly, and sacrificed the kine as a burnt-offering unto the Lord.

Among the many extraordinary points in this narrative, it is to be noted that Beth-shemesh was a Levitical town; so that the ark was divinely directed, not only in the Hebrew territory, but to a particular place, occupied by men who were devoted to the service of the sanctuary. This circumstance, whilst it partially accounts for the transgression which followed, rendered it inexcusable. The men of Beth-shemesh, probably anxious to know whether the sacred contents of the ark still remained, dared to look into the holy chest; which conduct was so offensive to God, that he cut off seventy men with sudden death. (See *Appendix*, note 49.) Terrified by this infliction, the men of Beth-shemesh sent to Kirjath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have brought again the ark of the Lord; come ye down, and fetch it up to you." 1 Sam. vi, 21. This request was complied with; and the sacred chest was deposited in the house of Abinadab, in the hill, who set apart his son to keep it.

During the whole of this period the Israelites appear to have remained in a state of inactivity, as respected their national independence; while the Philistines had been so humbled and terror-stricken by the judgment which had fallen upon them in connection with their possession of the ark, that they appear to have made no aggressive movement of importance for a considerable time.

Throughout this season of fearful religious declension, and national prostration and apathy, Samuel was raised up to take the direction of public affairs, and to restore unity and confidence to the Hebrew nation. As a prophet of God, his first efforts were directed to the religious instruction and reformation of the people; and, whilst thus occupied, he would have some acquaintance with secular affairs, from being called to adjust differences, and to arbitrate in cases of dispute. His devoted labors, in connection with the subjection and adversity to which the Israelites were exposed, induced a general desire for a better state of things: this feeling gradually acquired strength, until at length we are told, the people "lamented after the Lord." 1 Sam. vii, 2. Samuel took advantage of this disposition of the public mind, and earnestly exhorted them, as a test and proof of their sincerity, to cleanse themselves from the pollutions of Baal and Ashtaroth, and to give themselves fully to the service of the Lord. He then commanded them to gather all Israel to him at Mizpeh. Here the people met and confessed their sin, and fasted, and submitted themselves unto Samuel, who then entered fully upon the duties of his office as the acknowledged judge of Israel.

But this movement was too public and important to escape the vigilance of the Philistine lords. Either regarding this assembly as convoked for the purpose of fostering national objects, and of devising plans for the attainment of independence, which they were determined to crush; or as affording an opportunity of still further humbling the Hebrews, these tyrant rulers collected their forces, and marched an army against the Israelites at Mizpeh. The sons of Jacob were neither armed nor organized for war; their meeting had a design and character of a very different kind. When, therefore, they saw the approach of the Philistine host, they neither dared to meet them in battle, nor abandoned themselves to despair; they took the course always open to the house of Israel: they entreated Samuel to pray unto the Lord for them. The prophet complied, and proceeded to offer a burnt-offering, when the Philistines drew near in hostile array. But the prayer was heard: Jehovah interposed on behalf of his people, and thundered from heaven in a manner so terrible, that the Philistines, overwhelmed with terror and alarm, fled in confusion; the Israelites, availing themselves of the advantage, pursued their enemies, and smote them, and recovered possession of several cities which the Philistines had previously taken from Israel and retained. So decisive and complete was this triumph of Israel over their haughty foes, that we are told, "The Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." 1 Sam. vii, 13. (See *Appendix*, note 50.)

The character of Samuel in his judicial capacity, and the course of his public life, while perfectly consistent with his education and profession as a prophet, were, nevertheless, in remarkable contrast to the conduct of those who had preceded him as judges of Israel. These had generally distinguished themselves by some act of individual heroism, or military prowess, by which the power of the enemies of Israel was broken, and Hebrew liberty and independence obtained. But in the case of Samuel nothing of this kind is found. He appears to have directed his attention principally to the moral and religious elevation of the people. His first care was to repress disorder, to punish crime, and enforce an obedience to the law. For this purpose "he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all these places," 1 Sam. vii, 16; returning to his own residence at Ramah, where he heard causes, and administered justice. (See *Appendix*, note 51.)

Samuel also endeavored to give the people efficient instruction. This he did by providing for the education of their teachers. The

schools of the prophets, either originated or revived by him, greatly contributed to this important object. By this means the law of God became more generally known, and a decided improvement in the spirit and practice of the people was the result. (See *Appendix*, note 52.)

But as Samuel increased in years, his official labors became too great for his failing strength; and he availed himself of the aid of his sons in their performance. But if they did not sin so fearfully as the sons of Eli, they did not follow in the steps of their upright and pious father; they "turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." 1 Sam. viii, 3. This delinquency was the primary cause of a total change in the government of the Hebrew people. As Samuel was old, this conduct of his sons led the elders of Israel to consider the dangers and exigencies of the state. In these peculiar circumstances they saw that, with the death of Samuel, they would be deprived of all the efficiency and integrity of the government; and, having carefully considered the whole case, and matured their plan, they went to Samuel, and desired him to appoint a king over them. (See *Appendix*, note 53.)

The aged prophet was much grieved at this request; he saw that it was a reflection upon himself, and, to a great extent, a formal rejection of the theocracy. But although displeased and grieved, Samuel acted as became his character and profession: he "prayed unto the Lord;" and the Lord heard and answered. The prophet was commanded to accede to the request; but he was at the same time instructed to inform the people, that this application was a proof of their unfaithfulness, and would lead to a great alteration in the manners and condition of society, as the state of the sovereign would necessarily subject them, and their sons, and their daughters, to servitude. Yet all this did not alter their purpose; and they were dismissed to their homes, expecting the early appointment of a sovereign over the tribes of Israel.

Nor were these expectations disappointed. The person first raised to this high office by the express direction of Jehovah was Saul, a young man of the tribe of Benjamin. In stature he was considerably higher than any other man in Israel. Neither his tribe nor family was of such consequence as to give him any claim to distinction: his appointment, therefore, by the special election of Heaven, was calculated to allay, rather than foster, those emulations and jealousies which might have been called forth had a prince of the powerful tribe of Judah or of Ephraim been first invested with supreme power.

The manner in which this demand was made, and the motives

which led to it, will, if fairly considered, cast some light upon the social and political condition of the Israelites at this time. This great change in the government of the Hebrews was not effected by any violent revolution. It was not demanded by, or conceded to, any public clamor. It was called for by the legitimate leaders of the people: "All the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." 1 Sam. viii, 4, 5. Here is no tumult, no insubordination, no want of deference or respect to Samuel. If we look only to the terms of the application, it might be supposed that the elders fully estimated and approved the divinely purposed plan of a theocracy, but at the same time saw that the state of the people, both in a religious and social point of view, was utterly inadequate to carry out in practice a political constitution which required constant faith in God, and unreserved devotedness to his service; and which made this piety the bond of national confederation, and the spirit of every great national purpose and action. But when we look beyond the manner in which the demand was made, and see how it was persisted in when it was declared to imply a rejection of God, then it appears that, respectful and decorous as was the conduct of these men, even they possessed neither the faith nor obedience requisite to a clear apprehension of the nature of the theocracy, or a practical conformity to its requirements.

Thus, although the misconduct of Samuel's sons appears as the primary cause of this change in the government; and this united request of the elders, as the means by which it was secured; when we carefully review the whole matter, and especially the judgment of the Lord on the subject of the demand, (1 Sam. viii, 7, 8,) and the pertinacious reply of the elders, (verses 19, 20,) it is evident that the real cause of this movement lay in the unfaithfulness of the Hebrew mind, and that a king was given them, although it was an infringement of the divine plan, because a monarchical government was, under all circumstances, the nearest approach to it which the existing state of religion among the Hebrews rendered practicable.

Nor is it a matter of wonder that the population at large are not found foremost in making this request. It is scarcely possible, in any age or country, to find a people living in more perfect freedom than the Israelites, from the time of their entrance into Canaan to the establishment of monarchy. The only oppression to which they had been subjected was that of the princes of the neighboring tribes, who were permitted to tyrannize over them as a punishment for their sin. The social and political evils of this period were individual

licentiousness and the absence of national unity ; and these arose, not from any defect in the system of government, but from the faithlessness of the people. The sacred narrative repeatedly informs us, that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." The wholesome restraints of law and government were wanting ; and why ? Not because ample provision had not been made for this purpose, but because, God being their King, the principle of subjection and obedience was religion, and the people generally were irreligious. They were not faithful to God ; they did, therefore, not what he had commanded, but what they severally regarded as right or suitable ; and, consequently, great disorder and licentiousness prevailed. The same cause produced national disunion and consequent weakness. The system of polity established by Moses presented Jehovah as the centre and bond of union, which was intended to associate all the tribes of Israel into one brotherhood, one compact body politic. And while the spirit and genius of that economy were apprehended and obeyed, by a sincere and practical devotedness to the revealed will of Jehovah, this was done. But when Baal was worshiped by one section of the people, Ashtaroth by another, and a cold and formal recognition of Jehovah scarcely maintained ; then, as there was no political head acknowledged, and no bond of union between the tribes exercising effective influence, Israel existed only as separate and isolated families ; feeble from their disunion, and utterly unequal to national purpose or action. Hence, although the elders saw that the establishment of monarchy would limit their power, and give them a master, they deliberately and unanimously chose this as the only means of maintaining a national existence, and of preventing the several sections of the Hebrew family from falling a prey to the heathen tribes by which they were surrounded.

The appointment of the first sovereign was made in a manner which proved the election to be divine. It is not necessary to detail the circumstances which first brought Saul into the presence of Samuel. But the day before this meeting, the Lord told the prophet that he would send him "a man out of the land of Benjamin ;" adding, "Thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel." Samuel obeyed ; and on the following day, having hospitably received Saul, and entertained him with every mark of distinction, he at length took him apart, and anointed him with oil, saying, "The Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance." 1 Sam. x, 1. God was pleased to sustain this vocation, by adding to the natural endowments of Saul further qualifications for his new dignity, which were wrought in him by the special influence of the Holy Spirit. The fact of Samuel's anointing Saul before he had

received any command to make his appointment public, showed the strength of his faith, and proves that the entire transaction was under the direction of God. If, as has been sometimes profanely alleged, Samuel appointed Saul to the sovereignty in the hope that he would be subservient to him, and set him aside when he found him intractable; then the prophet would certainly in the first instance have taken measures for recommending him to the favorable notice of the people. But here the opposite course is adopted: the son of Kish is first privately anointed, and afterward elected by lot from all the tribes: a course which proves the faith and integrity of the prophet, and shows that Saul owed his elevation to divine selection alone.

This was the course adopted. Samuel assembled all Israel to meet him at Mizpeh; and, having briefly recounted the Lord's mercy in delivering them from Egypt, he reminded them that in demanding a king they had rejected the Lord, who had himself saved them out of all their adversities and tribulations. He then called them to present themselves before the Lord by their tribes; when, on the application of the lot, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. And afterward in a similar manner the family of Matri, and Saul the son of Kish, were selected. Samuel then presented the sovereign elect to the people, and they shouted, "May the king live!"* The prophet, having recorded these public transactions in a book, which he laid up before the Lord, dismissed the assembly, and sent the people to their homes. It does not appear that on this occasion any arrangement was made for supporting the regal dignity, or for defining the authority of the monarch: nor did these proceedings command universal approval. Some sons of Belial sneeringly said, "How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents." 1 Sam. x, 27. This conduct appears, however, to have been an exception to the prevailing feeling of the people, who generally approved of this compliance with their wishes; while others, "whose hearts God had touched," loved the sovereign, and followed him, and thus formed a kind of volunteer body-guard. Verse 26.

The first event which called Saul to exercise the functions of his new and elevated dignity, was the invasion of Israel by the Ammonites, under their king Nahash. It seems that this invasion was previously threatened, or had been some time in progress; for it is referred to as one of the principal causes which led the elders at this time to demand a king. 1 Sam. xii, 12. This aggression, made

*The authorized rendering of "God save the king," much as it has been quoted and used, is no translation of the original, and is, in fact, entirely unsanctioned by the Hebrew text.

by a people occupying the eastern frontier of the land of Israel, would necessarily, in the first instance, affect the trans-jordanic tribes. Of these territories Nahash selected Gilead; and as the inhabitants of this city found themselves unable to resist him, they offered to submit and serve him. But the cruel and haughty Ammonite refused to receive any submission, except the inhabitants would consent to be deprived of their right eyes; an infliction which he would avowedly regard as "a reproach upon all Israel." 1 Sam. xi, 2. (See *Appendix*, note 54.) The men of Jabesh-Gilead promised to submit even to these conditions, unless they were relieved in seven days. Meanwhile they sent messengers to all the coasts of Israel, imploring assistance. When this information reached Gibeah, Saul (who had returned to his agricultural pursuits) was in the field attending to his flocks. On coming in, he found the people weeping at the distressing information which they had received. While he listened to the sad account, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon him, and he instantly sent an urgent message to all Israel to come with him to the war. This demand was so promptly and generally obeyed, that he found himself at the head of a great army in time to afford the requisite aid to the men of Jabesh-Gilead. Inexperienced in war as the new king was at this time, he showed, by the manner in which he directed the attack on the host of the Ammonites, that he lacked neither skill nor courage. He informed his distressed brethren that they should on the morrow have help; and they sent a message to the king of the Ammonites, which threw him off his guard; while Saul, dividing his men into three companies, fell upon the enemy by surprise, and completely defeated and destroyed them.

Elevated and flushed with this great victory, the friends of Saul demanded that the men who despised him on his accession should be put to death. But the king most discreetly refused, declaring that, as the Lord had saved Israel, no man's life should be taken away. And all Israel rejoiced very greatly.

Samuel, who had accompanied this expedition, and who was not only an eye-witness of Saul's prudence and valor, but also saw that he had discretion enough to overlook the indignities which had been offered unto him when he was elected to the sovereignty, and that he, at the same time, possessed sufficient wisdom and moderation to pardon this conduct when flushed with victory, proposed that all Israel should repair to Gilgal, and confirm Saul in possession of the kingdom. This spot was regarded as sacred. It was the first resting-place of the ark after passing Jordan, and was the site on which Israel anew covenanted to serve Jehovah. Here, again, we are told, "they made Saul king." 1 Sam. xi, 15. Josephus says that Samuel

here anointed Saul a second time: nor does this appear at all improbable, though the circumstance is not mentioned in the Hebrew text; for the first anointing was a private transaction, and he was not anointed when elected by lot. It is remarkable that we find the same double anointing in the case of David. (See 1 Sam. xvi, 13; 2 Sam. v, 3. *Appendix*, note 55.)

From this time, therefore, Saul may be regarded as the recognized sovereign of Israel. Soon after his public inauguration, Samuel called a solemn assembly of the people; and when he appealed unto them, they fully exonerated him from all charge of blame in his public administration, and testified their conviction of the purity and integrity of his conduct. Having proved his Divine commission by a miraculous thunder, he earnestly exhorted them to follow the Lord with all their heart, and to serve Him; assuring them that the prosperity of their country entirely depended upon their fidelity, and that apostasy would certainly involve them and their king in destruction. The address of Samuel on this occasion was evidently designed to remove from the public mind any idea, that the new political arrangement which had been made could save the kingdom, apart from the presence and blessing of Jehovah.

After Saul had reigned two years, he collected a force of three thousand men, and attacked a garrison which the Philistines had established in Geber. The tyranny which this nation then exercised over those tribes of Israel which lay contiguous to their borders, equally indicated their cruelty, severity, pride, and overbearing character. As a proof of this, lest the Hebrews should arm themselves, the Philistines would not allow them to have any smith among them. Every man, therefore, was obliged to go down to the Philistines to have his iron agricultural instruments made or repaired; and the garrisons of which we read were probably established to enforce this political severity. The aggression of Saul roused the indignation of their enemies, and they gathered together an immense army, with which they invaded Israel. Saul also blew the trumpet, and his people assembled at Gilgal; but the host of the Philistines was so overwhelming in numbers, and so superior in equipment, that the Hebrews shrank from the contest, and hid themselves in caves and pits, until the king was left with only six hundred followers. When this movement was planned, Samuel had promised to come to Saul in seven days. The seventh day had arrived, when Saul found himself in these circumstances, with an immense host opposed to him, and supported by only a handful of men. This was an occasion when his faith and obedience were put to a very severe trial; and they unhappily failed: for, instead of

trusting in Jehovah, who, he knew, could save by many or few, as it pleased him, and waiting the full time for the aid and counsel of the prophet of the Most High, he hastily rushed into engagements which were beyond his province. Excited by the pressure of impending danger, and impatient at the delay of Samuel, although the time mentioned by the prophet had not fully elapsed, he proceeded to offer sacrifices himself; but before he had completed these sacred rites, Samuel arrived, rebuked his foolish conduct, and told him that the Lord, who would have confirmed the kingdom to him if he had been obedient, had now determined that it should not continue in his family. After the communication of these melancholy tidings, Samuel departed. The Hebrew text, as given in our authorized translation, makes the prophet go up to Gibeah; but this is certainly incorrect, and some words which have been preserved in the Septuagint give us the true sense of the narrative. Samuel returned to Ramah; and Saul, accompanied with about six hundred men, remained at Gibeah, watching the motions of the enemy.

The Philistines, with a great army, were encamped at Michmash, and, holding the Hebrew band in supreme contempt, they sent out divisions of their army by three different ways, to spoil and lay waste the country. This Saul had the mortification of seeing, although he had no power to prevent it. But at this crisis the Lord wrought a great deliverance for Israel by means of Jonathan, Saul's son, in a manner which clearly showed that the defense of Israel depended not on the multitude of her warriors. This young man, full of faith in God, proposed to his armor-bearer that they should go over and attack the garrison of the Philistines: he consenting, they did so in open day, their enemies in derision inviting them to advance. Having gained the summit of the rock, these two men threw themselves on the first body of foes they met, and the Lord marvelously helped them; for while they slew, there went a trembling throughout the hosts, and the earth quaked, and the Philistines in their haste and confusion killed and trampled upon each other. This being observed by Saul, he led on his force to the attack; all the people also joined in the pursuit, and Israel was saved that day with a great deliverance. The rout and ruin of the Philistine army were complete.

Yet, in the midst of this great success, Saul again displayed hastiness and want of judgment. In his anxiety to complete the ruin of his enemies, he adjured all the people, pronouncing a curse upon any who stayed to taste food before the evening. The evil consequences of this rash proceeding were twofold. The people, being thus faint with exertion, rushed hastily on the animals which were

near, slew them, and sinned in eating the flesh with the blood; while Jonathan, who had not heard his father's imprecation, but had eaten a little honey, was condemned to die for this involuntary disobedience. He was, however, saved from his father's judgment by the united determination of the people, that the instrument of their deliverance should not thus perish; "So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not." 1 Sam. xiv, 45.

Saul followed up this success by recovering the possessions which the Philistines had wrested from Israel. He also fought against the various enemies that had alternately harassed the Israelites. Moab, Ammon, Edom, and other States, were successively chastised; and wherever he turned his arms he prospered.

In the course of this successful career the king received, through Samuel, a special command from the Lord to carry into effect the Divine denunciation against the Amalekites. This injunction was given in the most explicit terms. He was to destroy them without any exception or reserve: he was not even to take any spoil of living creatures; oxen, sheep, camels, and asses were all to be slaughtered. Saul proceeded to the work assigned, and was completely successful; but having conquered, he again disobeyed the Divine command, in that he preserved Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and brought home the best of the cattle which had been found as spoil.

On his return, Samuel went down to Gilgal to meet him, charged with a message of judgment from God to the disobedient king. The Lord had revealed to the prophet a knowledge of what had taken place, and the doom which awaited the transgressor. On meeting Saul, and hearing from his own lips a statement of the case, Samuel, in a speech, brief, but full of power, pointed out his sin and his punishment. Saul endeavored in vain to excuse himself: the prophet reiterated his destiny: "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day." 1 Sam. xv, 28. Having commanded the immediate execution of Agag, Samuel returned to his house at Ramah; and, although he deeply deplored the conduct and punishment of Saul, he saw him no more.

The next event of importance in this history is the Divine appointment of a successor to Saul, in the government of Israel. "The Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. And Samuel said, How can I go? If Saul hear it, he will kill me." 1 Sam. xvi, 1, 2. This objection was, however, overruled, and Samuel went. Having

arrived at the house of Jesse, and called for his sons, Eliab the eldest being presented to him, the prophet was much pleased with his noble form and fine countenance, and doubted not that he was the prince elect. The Lord, however, reminded him that he saw not as man seeth,—that this was not the person. All the other sons of Jesse, except the youngest, passed in succession before the prophet, with the same result: at length David, the youngest, having been sent for, “the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.” Verse 12. “So Samuel anointed him, in the midst of all his brethren.” The sacred historian adds, “And the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.” Verse 13.

When God called men to important offices in the government of his people, he endowed them with corresponding gifts by the influence of the Holy Ghost. Not that this constrained their actions, or overruled their free agency: it was simply intended and designed to enable them to act more worthily of their vocation than they could do under the mere impulse of their natural powers.

But while David was the subject of this blessed inspiration, a very melancholy reverse was gathering over Saul. “The Spirit of the Lord departed from him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.” Verse 14. It may not be possible for us now to apprehend to its full extent the condition of the unhappy monarch. These words seem to teach, that the special influences of the Holy Spirit, which were given to him when he was called to the throne, were now taken away; and perhaps Satan, taking advantage of his distress, and operating upon his depressed and melancholy mind, reduced him to a state bordering upon insanity, a state in which he was at least subject to occasional fits of distraction.

In this affliction he was advised to try the soothing effect of music. In providing for this, David was recommended as a comely and valiant man, who was very skillful as a musician. The young man was brought into the royal presence, and his music was productive of the best effects: the king’s mind was soothed and delivered. Saul was therefore greatly pleased with David, and sent to Jesse to request that his son might remain in the royal service. This being granted, he was promoted to be armor-bearer to the king. (See *Appendix*, note 56.)

At this point of the history, the Philistines collected their forces, and came up against Israel, and Saul marched out to meet them. The battle was, however, deferred by the daring challenge of a huge giant, who, advancing from the enemy’s ranks, defied all the armies of Israel, and demanded the bravest of the Hebrews to come and

fight with him, offering to stake the independence of the two nations upon the issue of the contest.

David, who, as armor-bearer to the king, was present, seeing that even the boldest of Saul's soldiers shrank from this unequal conflict, and feeling the honor of the God of Israel impugned by the daring defiance of Goliath, nobly offered himself to the combat. Saul dissuaded his favorite from what he considered a rash purpose, by pointing out the disparity of his power in comparison with that of the giant. David modestly, but firmly repeated his proposal, basing his confidence not on human power, but on faith in God; assuring the king that, although young and inexperienced in war, he had already proved the sufficiency of the Divine protection; having slain a lion and a bear while keeping his father's sheep.

Saul then furnished David with armor; but this he declined; and in his simple garb, armed only with his sling and a few smooth stones from the brook, the Hebrew youth went to meet the heathen giant. No page of history is more full of sublimity than that which records the events of this day. The issue is well known. The Philistine champion having fallen, the army was routed with great slaughter; the honor of Jehovah being rescued from reproach, and the independence of Israel maintained.

The first results of this noble conduct seemed likely to raise David to great honor, distinction, and happiness. Saul promoted him in the army, and intrusted him in very important cases: the people greatly honored him, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. In such circumstances, David may have appeared to be an object of envy. But, alas! how fickle and fleeting are the honor of courts, and the smile of kings! The prowess and popularity of David were too much for his master. Saul, in all probability, although ignorant of the fact that David had been privately anointed, was led strongly to suspect that he was destined to be his successor; and, under these moody apprehensions, gave way, first to envy and ill-will, and at length to settled hatred and deliberate malice.

There are few portions of the history of the Hebrews or of the world, more full of interest, or more rich in the development of human nature, than those which record the narrative of this persecution. As it is detailed fully and in chronological order by the sacred writer, we shall merely refer to the more prominent circumstances.

The first incident which produced an unfavorable influence on the mind of Saul, was the song of the Hebrew women who came out to greet the warriors when they returned from the defeat of the Philistines: they went out to meet the king of Israel with music and dancing, and they sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his

ten thousands." 1 Sam. xviii, 7. Harassed by the thought that a young man, his subject, should be preferred to himself, he fell the next day into his former melancholy. David, as willing as before to assuage his pain by the power of music, played before him; but the malignant king twice attempted to destroy the man who had so greatly served him. David, however, escaped; and afterward Saul, as if ashamed of his conduct, proposed that David should marry his daughter. This, after having been delayed, was at length carried into effect, in a manner which more fully showed the determination of the king to rid himself, if possible, of the man whom he regarded as his enemy.

This disposition afterwards became more fully apparent. After many hair-breadth escapes, David was obliged to fly from his own house, by being let down from a window. He first took refuge with Samuel; and, when Saul sent messengers to take him, they were brought under the influence of an overwhelming spiritual visitation; so that they lost sight of their object, and began to prophesy. Other messengers being sent, they experienced a similar influence; and so did even Saul himself; which called forth the exclamation, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" 1 Sam. xix, 24.

From this sanctuary David privately returned, and had a most affectionate interview with Jonathan; who, having elicited the determination of his father to slay his friend, informed David, and sent him away. The son of Jesse then first proceeded to Nob, a city of the priests, and thence to Gath, where, having been recognized, he was led to feign himself mad. Expelled from the land of the Philistines, he returned to the country of Judah, where he concealed himself in the cave of Adullam. In this place, which was situated in the hill-country of Judea, and not far from Bethlehem, David was visited by many of his relations and friends, who, seeing his danger, determined to remain with him and share his fortune. Prior to this, David had wandered alone; or, if he had any companions, they were so few as not to be noticed in the narrative. But now, the intelligence that a man of his bravery and spirit was receiving followers, gradually spread abroad, until he soon found himself at the head of four hundred men. Another circumstance, arising out of the cruelty and impolitic conduct of Saul, gave increasing strength to this band; for, Saul having heard that David had been kindly entertained at Nob by the priests, although they were entirely ignorant of his alienation from the king, he sent, and had them and their families entirely destroyed, with all their cattle and goods. From this atrocious massacre, Abiathar, the son of the high priest, with the sacerdotal vestments, alone escaped, and came to David.

By this furious conduct the king not only deprived himself of access unto God through the medium of the high priest, but he threw this great boon into the hands of his persecuted subject. Of this advantage David soon after availed himself. Having by special direction left Adullam, and taken his abode in the forest of Hareth, he heard that the Philistines were besieging Keilah, a city of Judah, and inquired of the Lord whether he should march against them; to which inquiry the Lord replied, "Go and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah." 1 Sam. xxiii, 2. He did so, and defeated them with great slaughter, took from them much spoil, and saved the town. This victory being noised abroad, gave Saul the information he desired: he therefore prepared to invest the town, and take David. This project, however, the son of Jesse defeated, by again inquiring of the Lord; and, finding that the men of Keilah would ungratefully give him up to his enemy, he retired from the city into the wilderness of Ziph. Thither, too, he was followed by his implacable enemy; and would probably have fallen into his hands, had not the king been called off to repel an invasion of the Philistines, which gave David an opportunity of escaping to the strongholds of En-gedi. But again he was followed by Saul. The vigilant son of Jesse surprised the king while he lay asleep in a cave; but refused to inflict any injury, and only cut off the skirt of his robe. Afterward, having departed to some distance, he called to Saul, protested his innocence, reminded him that the skirt of his robe was a proof that he had no ill intention toward his sovereign, and reproached the king for his relentless hatred. Saul was subdued, and wept; admitted his firm conviction that David was destined to succeed him, and implored him not to destroy his family; to which request David consented with an oath.

While David was thus contending with the power and policy of Saul, Jonathan, who appears to have accompanied his father in this expedition, sought and found his friend in the wood, "and strengthened his hand in God." This episode (chap. xxiii, 16-19) is more rich in beauty and sublimity than any other that we meet with in the history, or even in the poetry, of the ancients. Here are two friends rising in generous and holy feeling above every sinister influence, and, amid all the intrigue and force of war, seeking to afford each other the high consolations of a holy religion, and of the most devoted friendship.

After this, Samuel died; and David had very nearly been induced to punish the coarse and sordid conduct of Nabal, but was pacified by the address of his wife.

Yet, notwithstanding all his former confessions and convictions,

Saul, with three thousand chosen men, went down to the wilderness of Ziph in pursuit of David. And here again David surprised him while asleep in the midst of his soldiers, again spared him; and, taking his spear as a proof of the fact, he went to the top of the opposite hill, and, calling to Abner, reproached him with his negligence. David then delivered a touching address to Saul, who a second time confessed his folly and his guilt. Notwithstanding this success, David still felt the imminent danger of his position, and determined once more to leave his native land, and seek refuge among the heathen. He went, with his troop of six hundred men, and his wives, and was kindly received by Achish, king of Gath, who assigned him Ziklag, a city which he had taken in the south of Judah, as a residence.

While here, David made incursions into the country of Amalek, and other nations hostile to Israel, destroying the hereditary enemies of his country, and taking much spoil. The Philistines, believing that these wars were carried on against Israel, rejoiced that they had obtained so efficient an ally. This confidence was so strong, that, when the Philistines united their forces to invade Israel, Achish took David and his troop with him, as a part of the army; but the other lords refused to allow him to remain with them, and insisted upon his immediate return. Thus was he relieved from a most embarrassing situation. When he came back to Ziklag, he found that it had been sacked by the Amalekites, and burnt with fire; and that his wives and all his property had been carried away.

In this new distress he again inquired of the Lord, and was commanded to pursue the enemy, and assured that he should recover all. He did so; and not only regained his substance, but took great spoil besides, which he divided into portions, and sent to the principal elders of Israel as a present from his hand: a certain proof that he regarded the circumstances of Saul as desperate, and that he wished to raise himself in the favorable opinion of his people.

There is, perhaps, no more interesting object in history than David, during this time of his fugitive career. A young man, called from the sheep-fold to a court, he not only conducted himself with consummate address, and by his musical powers rendered himself exceedingly useful to the afflicted king; he also proved himself a hero: he dared to meet, and succeeded in killing, a giant-warrior, whom no other man in Israel would venture to encounter. Beyond this, he exhibited all the qualities of a military leader, and rendered himself highly popular by a display of united prudence and valor in the conduct of the several important operations, with the management of which he was intrusted. Having thus shown his capacity,

this young man meets with what is not one of the usual occurrences of court life: he is hurled from his position, and, without friends, wealth, or resources beyond himself, he is persecuted and hunted by an energetic and malignant monarch, with an army at his back. Yet this youth not only escapes all his enemies, but, amid all this danger, gathers around him a trusty band of six hundred warriors: he makes himself feared by his foes, respected by his friends; and, even while suffering under injury and persecution, is found silently, but steadily, preparing his way to the throne. If this conduct evinced great talent, still greater were the piety and genius which shone in this noble Hebrew. Throughout his critical career, David displayed unbending integrity and high religious principle: when his deadly enemy lay asleep before him, he steadily refused to allow "the Lord's anointed" to be injured. Nor is this the only or the greatest peculiarity of his case. In the midst of his wandering, wilderness life, harassed by day and night, hunted like a partridge on the mountains, David gave expression to the feelings of his heart in soul-inspiring song. That these compositions should display energy, and breathe impassioned feeling, we might have expected; but that they should be marked by a brilliancy of genius, a chasteness of expression, and a purity of taste unsurpassed in any nation or age of the world, must be regarded as a most remarkable fact. "Compare the Book of Psalms with the Odes of Horace or Anacreon; with the Hymns of Callimachus, the Golden Verses of Pythagoras, the choruses of the Greek tragedians; and you will quickly see how greatly it surpasses them all in piety of sentiment, in sublimity of expression, in purity of morality, and in rational theology."—*Bishop Watson*.

While David was wandering in the wilderness, and sojourning one year and five months with the Philistines, the crisis of Saul's fate was rapidly approaching. Unhappy in himself, having sinned against God, and unhappy in his circumstances, he greatly wished to obtain supernatural direction and advice. This privilege legitimately belonged to his office; but his sin had shut him out from access unto God. Bewildered and oppressed, he sought the desired aid through a forbidden medium; and though at the beginning of his reign he had rigidly enforced the Mosaic laws against diviners and wizards, and cut off many of them from the land, he now earnestly seeks for one of these, as his only resource. Obtaining the requisite information, he repaired to a woman of Endor, and requested her to bring him a spirit from the invisible world. The woman, expressing her fear on account of the severity of Saul, and having his solemn oath that no harm should come to her, demanded whom she should raise; and he said, Samuel. Proceeding with her

incantations, she became greatly alarmed, and at length discovered the quality of her visitor. Saul, however, reassured her, while she described the form of the approaching spirit; and the king recognized Samuel. The prophet conversed with Saul, and assured him that the next day Israel would be defeated, and himself and his sons slain. (See *Appendix*, note 57.)

Receiving this intelligence, the affrighted monarch sank prostrate on the earth, but was recovered by the kind attentions of the sorceress, and the same night returned to his army. The fatal conflict took place the next day, when the words of Samuel were fully verified,—the men of Israel fled before the host of the Philistines, Saul's sons were all slain, and the king himself wounded, and, being so hard pressed by his enemies as to have no hope of escape, fell upon his sword, and died also.

The melancholy fate of this sovereign is admonitory, not only as showing the consequences of transgression in an individual; it was especially so in its public and political influence. The people had virtually given up the theocratic government, in its strict and proper sense, when they demanded a king. But Israel was still destined to remain the peculiar people of Jehovah; and therefore it was important they should see that, whatever alterations might be made in their political constitution, or in the manner of conducting their public affairs, nothing could save them from disaster and disgrace, if they took a course contrary to the Divine will; that no ability or prowess could guarantee success, without steady obedience to God. Saul was a man of noble bodily appearance, and of more than ordinary powers of mind; he was not inferior in council, and was certainly valiant in fight. Yet, although divinely appointed to his high office, he was, in consequence of his transgression, the subject of continued unhappiness, and ultimately involved his country in calamity, as he exposed himself to ruin.

The disastrous battle of Gilboa, while it seemed to prostrate the power of Israel, opened the way of honor and dominion unto David. He had, notwithstanding the persecution of Saul, gradually risen in influence even during the time of his exile. He went out friendless and poor; but at the death of the son of Kish he was recognized as a powerful chieftain at the head of a numerous body of men, who had been so fully disciplined under his direction, that their hardihood and daring were unequalled. The sacred writer seems unable to express his opinion of the martial power of this troop, and exclaimed, "It was a great host, like the host of God." 1 Chron. xii, 22.

It has been conjectured, and with some degree of probability, that his marriage with Abigail, the widow of Nabal, gave him considera-

ble property. But, however this may be, it is certain that at the death of Saul he occupied a very prominent position. At this crisis, having poured out the emotions of his heart in an elegant monody on the death of Saul and his sons, he again "inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the Lord said, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron." 2 Sam. ii, 1. The son of Jesse obeyed, and he and his men went up to Hebron; and the elders of Judah came and made David king over that powerful tribe. But Abner, who had been the principal military commander under Saul, took Ish-bosheth, and made him king over several of the other tribes of Israel.

The influence of Abner was sufficient to maintain the son of Saul with some show of dominion during seven years; but throughout the whole of this time David waxed stronger and stronger, and the son of Saul became gradually weaker. At length, Ish-bosheth having offended Abner, he determined to transfer the weight of his influence to David; and while visiting Hebron for this purpose, he was slain by Joab in revenge for the death of Asahel, the brother of Joab, whom Abner had killed in battle. Immediately after this, two of the captains of Ish-bosheth murdered their master, and fled to David, who commanded them to be put to death, as the reward of their treason. Then all Israel gathered themselves together unto Hebron, and anointed David king over all Israel.

The accession of the son of Jesse may be justly regarded as a most important epoch in the history of the Hebrews. He was a man whose mental endowments were of the first order. It may indeed be questioned whether any other man is exhibited in the whole history of the world, who united in his individual character so many different elements of real greatness, and these in such perfection. Although but thirty-seven years of age when he began to reign over all Israel, his character had been developed to a considerable extent. He had raised himself, by the force of his talents and energy, from a very humble origin to the rank of a powerful military leader, and thus ascended the throne with all the prestige of a high character and great influence. He had, besides, the advantage of considerable experience. He was not, like Saul, taken from the oxen to direct the affairs of state. David had passed through many years of toil and danger, by which his judgment had been matured, and his mind disciplined. In addition, we must not forget the connections which he had formed. The lords of the Philistines appreciated his talent and power, although they distrusted his zeal. With the king of Moab he was on terms of intimacy, and intrusted the care of his

parents to his kindness; with Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, he was friendly, 2 Sam. x, 2; and even during the life of Saul some of the most noble Israelites of various tribes flocked to his standard. All this contributed to place David on the throne, and to invest his government with an *éclat* unknown before in Israel.

And his deeds justified the hopes which his preceding character had raised. Jerusalem had before this time been frequently noticed as a central or metropolitan station. It had been taken by Joshua; and from the fact that David brought the head of Goliath to this place, it is inferred that it was then the royal residence of Saul. However this may be, it seems certain that the upper city and fortress had never been subdued, but remained in possession of the Jebusites, who also, after the defeat of the Israelites on the death of Saul, took possession of the whole town. David's first effort was to obtain entire possession of this stronghold. He therefore marched his forces to invest it, and was doubly stimulated to the enterprise by the coarse irony of the besieged, who, confiding in the strength of their fortified place, arrayed the blind and lame that were among them on the walls, and contemptuously declared, "Thou shalt not come in hither; for the blind and the lame shall drive thee away." 2 Sam. v, 6.—*Kennicott*. This was, however, a vain boast. David proclaimed that the first man who succeeded in storming the walls should be chief captain. This daring exploit was performed by Joab, who was consequently appointed to the promised dignity. The success was complete; the whole of the city and fortress was perfectly subdued, and David established his residence there, and proceeded to build a royal palace. Hiram, the Phœnician king of Tyre, assisted him in that work, and supplied him with materials and artificers for the purpose. On the completion of the fabric, the inspired king poured out the feelings of his heart in sacred song. Psalm xxx.

Having thus made Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom, David was also desirous of giving it special opportunities of religious worship; and for that purpose removed the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim unto Mount Zion. (The particulars of this will be detailed in the next chapter.)

The fragmentary information which we possess, even of this period, does not enable us to write a history. It is, for instance, impossible to account for the entire absence of those results which might have been expected from the victory which the Philistines obtained over Israel when Saul and his sons were slain at Mount Gilboa. Notwithstanding the completeness of this defeat, and the divided state of Israel afterwards under Ish-bosheth and David, we

do not hear that they established a single post in the country; in fact, we know nothing of their making any further aggression on the Israelites for many years. When, however, it was known that David was anointed king over all Israel, they became alarmed, lest the ascendancy which they had acquired over this people should be destroyed; they therefore collected their forces, and came up to seek David. Seeing the importance of the occasion, he immediately "inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? Wilt thou deliver them into mine hand?" to which the decisive response was given, "Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand." 2 Sam. v, 19. It is worthy of remark, that while in cases of difficulty and importance Saul almost always acted under the impulse of his own feeling and judgment, David, at least in the early part of his reign, as constantly inquired of the Lord by Urim and Thummim. Obedient to the oracle, he marched against the enemy, and engaged them with complete success. On this occasion the Philistines felt the dishonor which had been inflicted upon Israel when the ark of God was taken; for in the suddenness and extent of the defeat, they left upon the field of battle their images in which they trusted, and David and his men took and burned them.

Determined, if possible, to repair this disgrace, the Philistines assembled another army, and pitched in the valley of Rephaim. David again "inquired of the Lord," and was commanded not to march directly to the attack, but to take a compass, and, hanging upon their rear, to be guided in his assault by a noise which he was told he should hear in the tops of the mulberry-trees. The king of Israel obeyed these directions, and was again successful: the Philistines were completely routed.

These wars appear to have consolidated the power of David. His able and energetic mind had united the tribes of Israel together, and combined their numbers and prowess, in a manner that had never been done before, and which made them very formidable to their enemies. At the same time, the internal economy of the Israelitish nation was greatly improved. Jurisprudence was established; the military force was organized; and the greatest warriors promoted to dignity according to their valor. 2 Sam. xxiii, 8-13; 1 Chron. xi, 29-47. The capital was ornamented and fortified, 2 Sam. v, 4-11; and the different departments of public affairs intrusted to different hands. Joab was commander-in-chief of the army; Jehoshaphat was recorder, whose duty it was to make and preserve a faithful chronicle of public events; Zadok and Ahimelech were high priests, and Seraiah scribe, or secretary to the king. 2 Sam. viii, 16, 17.

In this prosperity David desired to build a house for the ark of God; and having signified his purpose to Nathan the prophet, he, speaking his own judgment, encouraged him to do all that was in his heart, and assured him that the Lord would be with him. In that night, however, God made a special revelation of his will to the prophet, by which he was commissioned to forbid David to enter upon this work himself, but to assure him that his son, who was destined to succeed him on the throne, should accomplish it. This Divine communication, and the conduct and language of David consequent upon it, are altogether so remarkable, that we shall in another place have specially to refer to them.

The power of the Jewish nation was now sufficiently developed, and its internal policy was so fully established, that the king was enabled to turn his arms against those neighboring States which had previously acted the part of tyrants. He accordingly began with the most powerful of Israel's hereditary foes, the Philistines. These he completely subdued, and took and occupied the royal city of Gath;* thus turning the advantage of this strong frontier fortress against themselves. Moab was next attacked, and vanquished. There is great obscurity in the terms in which this conquest is recorded; and, in consequence, much censure (in all probability wholly undeserved) has been cast on the conduct of David in this transaction.

But, whatever may be the exact meaning of the terms used by the sacred writer, when describing the conduct of David towards the Moabites, it is certain that they were completely subdued, and rendered tributary. Encouraged by this success, David determined to lay claim to the whole of the territory promised by Jehovah to the seed of Abraham. He therefore assailed Hadadezer, king of Zobah, as "he went to establish"† his frontier on the Euphrates. In this war, also, although David had to contend against a numerous troop of chariots and cavalry, he was completely successful, and captured a large number of chariots and horses. He also took shields of gold from the servants of Hadadezer, and other valuable spoil.

Alarmed at the continued success of the Hebrews, the Syrians of Damascus marched to succor Hadadezer; but David inflicted on them a severe chastisement: they were defeated, with a loss of twenty-two thousand men; and were consequently compelled to receive a Jewish garrison in Damascus, and to pay tribute to the Hebrew king. Returning from these triumphs, he smote the Edomites in the Valley of Salt,‡ having slain eighteen thousand men of

* The sacred writer here calls Gath *Metheg-ammah*, which is translated by Horsley, "the bridle of bondage;" a name remarkably significant of the object for which this city was so strongly fortified, while the Israelites were held in complete subjection.

† See Horsley's *Biblical Criticism*, vol. i, p. 352.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 354.

them: he completely subdued the country, and occupied their most important fortified posts with his garrisons.

After these warlike exploits, David turned his particular attention to the internal affairs of his kingdom; and, seeing everywhere indications of success and prosperity, his thoughts reverted to the scenes of his youth and affliction. On inquiry, he found that there was a son of Jonathan still alive, whose name was Mephibosheth; and, in accordance with his covenant friendship with the father, he showed kindness to the son, decreed that he should possess all the property that had belonged to the house of Saul, and invited him constantly to sit at the royal table.

After this, David heard of the death of Nahash, king of the Ammonites; and he said, "I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness unto me." 2 Sam. x, 2. In what way or manner David had received kindness from Nahash, is unknown; but his sympathy with the son was certainly generous and sincere. He accordingly sent servants with a message of compliment and condolence to the young king. But the counselors of Hanun persuaded him that in this David had some sinister design. He therefore took the servants of David, and cut off their garments to the middle, shaved off one-half of their beards, and sent them away. This being the most ignominious treatment which, according to oriental manners, could have been inflicted, David felt the insult, and, being determined to avenge it, prepared for war. The Ammonites, also, knowing that this must be the result of their conduct, negotiated with their neighbors, and obtained powerful aid from several Syrian tribes. After the preparations were complete, David sent Joab in command of the army to invade Ammon. He did so, with as much discretion as valor. Dividing his forces into two portions, he took the command of one himself, and gave the other in charge to his brother Abishai. With his own troops he attacked the confederate Syrians, while his brother engaged the Ammonites. Both divisions of the Israelitish army were successful: the Syrians were defeated; and the Ammonites, being driven from the field, were shut up in their capital.

The Syrians attempted to revenge this defeat, by collecting troops from beyond the Euphrates; but David marched against them in person, and obtained a decisive victory over the Syrian general, a great number of whose troops were left dead on the field; and Syria, entirely subdued, was added to the number of those States which were tributary to Israel.

In the next campaign David sent forth Joab with his army to complete the subjugation of the Ammonites. This war, although ulti-

mately successful, is associated with the great sin of David's life. Up to this time the personal conduct of the king had been honorable and without reproach. As a poet, musician, warrior, and statesman, he had displayed the most elevated attributes, and attained the highest celebrity. Although exception has been taken to some of his actions, it may, nevertheless, be confidently asserted, that he had maintained undeviating devotedness to the service of Jehovah. Here, indeed, we have to contemplate a sad reverse. We need not repeat the disagreeable particulars of the narrative. David, walking on the roof of his house, saw a beautiful woman bathing in an adjoining garden. Inflamed with desire, he inquired after this person; and, although he was told she was the wife of an officer in his service, he at once sent for her; and they sinned. The crime thus committed was greatly aggravated by the subsequent conduct of the king. Having been informed that Bathsheba was with child, he at first used all his art and influence to induce her husband Uriah to go into the company of his wife; but, failing in this, and seeing no other way of concealing their crime, he wrote to Joab by the hands of Uriah himself, requesting the commander-in-chief to employ this gallant soldier in some perilous service, and then to abandon him to his fate. The murderous command was obeyed, and the brave man was sacrificed, a victim to royal lust and power.

This iniquity being consummated, David took Bathsheba to wife, and all their guilt seemed likely to remain a perpetual secret. But God looked from heaven, and frowned upon this enormous wickedness. It is worthy of serious remark, that this case fully demonstrates the true nature and fearful consequences of sin. There was nothing in all this which, judged by a merely earthly standard, was calculated to produce any fearful effect upon the nation, or on the family of David. It introduced no pestilence, provoked the anger of no powerful contemporary people, sowed no seeds of intestine disorder or commotion; and, on every merely rational ground, would, although wrong in itself, have been productive of no serious effect. Such, however, was not its issue. David had taken every precaution; but all was vain. God sent Nathan the prophet to make a special application to the king. He did this with inimitable beauty and simplicity; and the parable showing the wrongs of the poor man who was robbed of his ewe lamb, and the licentious cupidity and cruelty of his rich neighbor, excited the just indignation of the sovereign; and he declared, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." But what was the state of David's mind when the prophet replied, "Thou art the man," (2 Sam. xii, 5, 7,) and pointed out to him, in the most circumstantial manner, the whole

course of his iniquity ! David, although convicted, was not destroyed. The word of Jehovah denounced, indeed, a series of punishments ; but they were destined to be of a national and family, rather than of a personal, kind : the sentence was, " The sword shall never depart from thine house. I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house." Verses 10, 11.

It is but just to the character of David to observe that the penitence which he manifested was as deep and sincere as his transgression had been aggravated. But, notwithstanding this, although he personally obtained pardon, the threatened infliction soon rested upon him. The child born unto Bathsheba died. This was the source of the deepest affliction, and moved the king to the utmost humiliation and prayer ; and, being the first penal visitation, he evidently hoped, if it could be averted, that the Divine wrath might yet be turned aside. His hopes were vain ; the infant was laid in the tomb. And although a gleam of prosperity rested upon the arms of Israel, by the capture of Rabbah, and the entire subjugation of the Ammonites ; neither this triumph, nor the wealth obtained thereby, saved the family of David from threatened punishment.

The first serious evil which afflicted the royal family of Israel, was the rape of Tamar by her half-brother Amnon. This in itself was sufficiently disgraceful, and involved David and his children in deep affliction. It was, however, greatly aggravated by the conduct of Absalom, who, in revenge for the injury done to his sister, took the first favorable opportunity, (although it did not occur until after two full years,) and killed Amnon. The assassination of the king's eldest son, by the order of his brother, must have been felt, not only as a deep family affliction, but as a great public calamity. Absalom fled from the hand of justice, and took refuge with his maternal grandfather, Talmai, king of Geshur, where he continued in exile three years.

The murder of the eldest son and heir-apparent, and the exile of the prince next in succession, were most unpropitious to the interests of the reigning house. But, independently of this, David, who had now to a great extent become reconciled to the death of Amnon, yearned after Absalom. Joab, perceiving the king's sorrow, obtained the assistance of a very ingenious woman, a widow of Tekoa, who, under pretense of soliciting the royal intervention in her own case, so excited David's sympathy that, at length, by adroitly turning the thoughts of the king to his own case, she induced him to allow the return of Absalom to Jerusalem. Still, however, the sovereign was not lost in the father ; for, although permitted to reside in the capital, Absalom was confined to his own house, and was neither permitted

to see the king, nor to be received at court, for two full years after his return from Geshur.

At the expiration of this time, the prince, feeling thorough disgust at being thus immured in his own habitation, after several ineffectual efforts, obtained an interview with Joab, and represented to him the intolerable misery of his position, closing his impassioned address by saying, "Let me see the king's face; and if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me." 2 Sam. xiv, 32. This effort was successful. Joab represented the case to the king, who called for Absalom, received his submission, kissed him, and thus perfected his pardon, and restored him to favor.

The conduct of David in this part of his history has been very severely criticised by different writers; but, without attempting a full justification of the king's conduct in the pardon of Absalom, we think, considering the peculiar difficulty which everywhere existed, and especially when the supreme magistrate was the father of all the suffering and offending parties, that David, on the whole, acted with great prudence and judgment.

This reconciliation was far from healing the distraction, disorder, and suffering which had for many years afflicted the royal family of Israel. Deeper and darker sorrows were soon to rest upon the destinies of the reigning house. It has been conjectured that Absalom, during the time of his exile, and especially while confined to his house in Jerusalem, entertained doubts that, notwithstanding his birthright, his transgression in the case of Amnon, and other causes, had induced his father to overlook his claims to the crown, and to meditate the appointment of one of his junior brothers in his stead. Whether this very probable surmise be correct or not, it is certain, that no sooner was Absalom liberated from all restraint than he began to affect superior state as the heir-apparent, and to court popularity by expressing the most hearty sympathy with all complainers, and indirectly, if not openly, to reflect upon the energy and equity of the king's government; until at length, having obtained extensive promises of support, he threw off all disguise, and had himself proclaimed king in Hebron. (See *Appendix*, note 58.)

As the narrative of this rebellion is given by the inspired writers with minute and complete accuracy, it is only necessary to refer to the prominent facts. David, on hearing of the defection of the people, and of the proclamation of Absalom, manifested none of his characteristic bravery, but at once commanded a retreat from the capital. His conduct clearly exhibits a great man bending under the judicial visitations of Divine Providence. Forlorn and distressed, the aged monarch hasted from Jerusalem, accompanied by his house-

hold, and those of the troops and people who were devoted to his service. In this flight, although David appeared weighed down beneath divine infliction, he lost none of his sagacity and self-possession. When the priests bare the ark of God before him, he commanded them to return, and to send him information of what was passing in the capital. The defection which appeared most sensibly to affect David was that of his confidential counselor Ahithophel. This loss was so great to him, that he earnestly prayed that Jehovah might "turn his counsel into foolishness." 2 Sam. xv, 31. Hushai, who appears to have stood next to the sage Gilonite for wisdom in council, and who followed the king, David advised to return also, and, if possible, in the cabinet of Absalom, to defeat the wise advice of Ahithophel.

Absalom, on reaching Jerusalem, elated with success, committed the infamous crime which, according to the prediction of Nathan, was to complete the punishment of David for his licentiousness. In the sight of Israel he went in unto the concubines whom David had left in charge of the royal residence. Ahithophel, having counseled this measure, next advised that twelve thousand chosen troops should be immediately sent in pursuit of the fugitive king. Hushai succeeded in defeating this crafty counsel; and David in consequence was able to reach a place of refuge, and to obtain a more numerous and better regulated force. Another very important result of this delay was, the loss of Ahithophel to the council of Absalom; for this proud sage, seeing his advice overruled, and justly dreading the consequences to the cause of the usurper, immediately returned to his own house, and hanged himself.

Having consumed some time in making every needful preparation, the unnatural son marched in pursuit of his father; who at Mahanaim (a town on the river Jabbok) awaited the conflict. The result is well known: the rebel army was defeated, and the unnatural usurper slain. Nothing, however, in all this proceeding invests the character of David with so much interest as his unquenchable affection for his rebellious son. His grief on the death of Absalom was intense, and even endangered the popularity of the king with his heroic defenders.

After this victory, a short time sufficed to restore David to his throne, and to establish his authority once more over the whole land of Israel.

But, although this rebellion was the most fearful blast of that storm of indignation which the sin of David had brought upon himself and upon his country, it had not yet been exhausted. The malediction remained in all its force, "The sword shall never depart

from thine house." The serious reader of the Scripture narrative will feel some surprise at the terms in which the conduct of the tribes is described in the account of the return of the king. Judah, as more nearly related to David, appears to have claimed a more special interest in his person and restoration to the sovereignty. The other tribes of Israel, as constituting the bulk of the nation, claimed a greater interest in the person of the king. The result of these conflicting claims was a serious altercation between the chiefs of the several clans, in which we are told, "The words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel." 2 Sam. xix, 43.

This apparently accidental circumstance casts great light upon the political state of Israel at this period. We are thus informed that, notwithstanding the improved organization which was introduced into every department of the state, by the genius and energy of David, throughout his lengthened reign, he had not succeeded in fusing the Hebrew people into one united body; the local and sectional peculiarities and prejudices of the several tribes still remained in all their force and influence. These conflicting feelings account for the war which immediately succeeded, and also for the final division of the children of Israel into two separate and independent monarchies.

Prior to his return, David had secured the adherence of Amasa, who had been general-in-chief under Absalom; but the fierce contention to which we have referred brought into prominence a violent spirit, who, taking advantage of the existing dissension, dared at once to raise the standard of revolt. Sheba, a warrior of the tribe of Benjamin, and probably a relative of the family of Saul, was the leader in this enterprise. "He blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel." 2 Sam. xx, 1. Great numbers of those who had followed Absalom obeyed this summons; and this new rebellion assumed a most serious aspect. David had previously promised Amasa that he should be chief captain; and this crisis afforded a fair opportunity of testing the sincerity of his allegiance. The king therefore commanded him to collect the military power of Judah in three days, that he might take the field against Sheba. The new captain-general, however, took more time than the king had allowed. What was the cause of this delay we are not informed: whether Amasa was dilatory in his preparation to take the field against his former associates, or whether the soldiers of Judah distrusted their new officer, we cannot tell. When, however, the time had expired, and the king's forces were not prepared, David became

alarmed, and requested Abishai to gather the troops together, lest the rebellion of Sheba should assume a more formidable appearance than that of Absalom.

In this emergency, the daring energy of Joab, although he had been superseded in the chief command, was again called into exercise, and again succeeded. He first assassinated Amasa, and then, assuming the command of the army, pursued Sheba to Abel; which town he so closely invested, that the inhabitants, to save themselves, slew the traitor, and threw his head over the wall to Joab, who thereupon drew off his men. Thus was this rebellion quelled, and Joab again took his former place as captain of the host.

Following the course of the Scripture narrative, the events recorded in 2 Samuel xxi, come next under consideration. We are here informed that the land of Israel was afflicted with famine three consecutive years; that, upon inquiry, the oracle of Jehovah declared that this was an infliction occasioned by Saul's slaughter of the Gibeonites. David hereupon inquired of this people what atonement would satisfy them; and they, repudiating all pecuniary recompense, demanded seven men of the house of Saul to be put to death, and hung up before the Lord in Gibeon. With this request David complied, and the famine ceased. (See *Appendix*, note 59.)

Whatever difficulties the Scripture narrative presents to our view, it clearly teaches that, after all the troubles through which David had passed, and all the dangers he had escaped, he still continued to direct the martial affairs of the country with great energy, and that his wars were successful in every direction. It is, however, a melancholy fact, that we are informed of another transgression of this aged monarch, which exposed him to much trouble, and brought the nation into great distress. The act which produced these melancholy results was that of numbering the people. (See *Appendix*, note 60.)

Whatever the precise nature of this transgression might have been, it is certain that Joab and the other captains fully understood the iniquitous character of the work; and although, after having expostulated with David in vain, they proceeded with the enumeration of the people, it was never completed. The language of the inspired writer, in the narration of this event, is remarkable. After stating the numbers returned to the king by the captain-general, it is said, "But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab." 1 Chron. xxi, 6.

David's sin in this instance was visited with sudden and summary punishment. It appears from the narrative, that the conscience of the king was quickly awakened to a sense of his guilt before any

messenger from Jehovah visited him. This conviction was, however, soon followed by penal visitation. The prophet Gad came to the king, and offered him his choice of three several punishments,—seven years of famine, three months' disastrous defeat in war, or three days' pestilence. These alternatives were presented to the king, who was commanded to make choice of one of these evils. It has been thought a very strange circumstance, that each of these inflictions was directed rather against the people, who had taken no part in this transgression, than against the king, who alone was guilty. The reply to this is, first, that God, being the supreme Governor of the world, has a right to subject mankind to any providential visitations; and in the exercise of his infinite goodness and wisdom he, and he alone, can adapt these visitations so as to accomplish his primary purposes without subjecting any creature to undue injury or injustice. Secondly, It must be remembered that the transgression of David in this case was one of a public character, which arose out of an official discharge of his public duty, and that the exercise of these powers necessarily involved the safety and happiness of the people. The case before us, therefore, presents no greater difficulty than that of one man misusing powers with which he was intrusted, and thus involving a whole community in difficulty, disaster, or disease.

It may, however, be fairly questioned whether any course would have more effectually brought the erring king to a sense of the greatness of his sin than that which was appointed. David having chosen that punishment which more immediately placed himself in contact with Divine justice, when he saw the devastations of the destroying pestilence, deeply sympathizing with his suffering people, he cried unto the Lord, saying, "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house." 2 Sam. xxiv, 17. In this case, as in many others, Jehovah remembered mercy in his wrath, and stayed the progress of the destroying angel as he drew near toward Jerusalem, after seventy thousand men had died of the pestilence, which, in all probability, lasted but a few hours.

This national infliction was over, and the king had recovered from its fearful consequences, when he devoted himself to preparations for the building of a temple, which was to be carried into effect by his successor. He also made a very careful classification of the Levites, that the temple-service might be conducted in the most orderly and magnificent manner. These objects occupied the declining years of David. In these pious efforts the princes, nobles, and great men of Israel generously seconded the benefactions of the sovereign; so that the provision for the erection of the sacred edifice was immense.

We are now led to consider the last days of this great man, and the appointment of his successor. These circumstances are pregnant with the most intense interest, and exhibit David, notwithstanding his age and infirmity, in all the greatness of his character. God himself had made the appointment of the succession to the throne, and had ordained Solomon to that dignity. This election had been made known, and was acknowledged. Long after David had been king over Israel, and when his eldest sons were young men, God sent a message by Nathan unto David, which, among other things, announced that a son, yet to be born, should be established in the kingdom as his successor. 2 Sam. vii, 12. Again, after the birth of Solomon, he is pointed out by name as destined to inherit his father's dignity.* That this appointment was publicly known, at least to all the royal family, is evident from the admission of Adonijah, whose language shows that he was fully cognizant of it. 1 Kings ii, 15. He does not say simply that the kingdom was taken from him, and given to his younger brother; but appears distinctly to admit his prior appointment to it: "*It was his from the Lord.*"

Nevertheless, when David's declining health, and the pressure of extreme old age, portended his early death, Adonijah, his oldest living son, having brought over Joab the captain-general, and Abiathar the chief priest, to his views, determined to grasp the government before it had quite fallen from the hand of his father. He therefore assumed the state and privileges of sovereignty, 1 Kings i, 5, 6; and finding that his father did not interfere, he proceeded to appoint the usual inauguration feast, to which he invited all the persons of influence who were likely to support his pretensions; Solomon, Benaiah, Zadok, and Nathan, being excluded. This, in itself, is a further proof that he knew that his younger brother had been appointed to succeed his father. When David was informed of these measures, he immediately commanded Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah to take Solomon in royal state to Gihon, on the king's own mule, and there to anoint him king, and to place him at once on the throne of Israel. This movement was very popular; the whole multitude of Israel gathered around the youthful king, and rent the air with their acclamations. Adonijah and his party were soon informed of what had taken place; and, dismayed at their former temerity and present danger, they immediately separated, and Adonijah sought refuge in the sanctuary by taking hold of the horns of the altar. Solomon on this occasion conducted himself with equal judgment and spirit. He forgave his brother Adonijah, and sent him to his house, and

* 1 Chron. xxii, 9, 10. The first clause of the ninth verse is incorrectly translated in our version: it should be, "A son is born," &c. See Dr. Adam Clarke on 2 Sam. vii.

proceeded to take upon himself the administration of the national affairs.

Perhaps there never was a sovereign who made wiser preparations for the future well-being of his kingdom, or retired from public life with more grace and dignity, than David. Having assembled all the ecclesiastical, civil, and military authorities of the kingdom, (1 Chron. xxiii, 1, 2,) and given them his arrangement for the service of the house of the Lord, (chap. xxiv-xxvi, 19,) propounded the order of military service, (chap. xxvii, 1-23,) and the stewardship of the royal domains, (chap. xxvi, 20-32; xxvii, 24-34;) he exerted all his remaining strength, and stood up before this august meeting.

We cannot claim unparalleled importance for this assembly on merely human grounds. Persia and Egypt, Greece and Rome, may have produced congregations as rich in wealth, as elevated in intellect, and as dignified by martial prowess, as this meeting of the Hebrew monarch and his priests, princes, and captains; although we are strongly inclined to think that, on these grounds, the king of Israel, surrounded by his people, would bear a respectable comparison with any national assembly ever convened. There are, however, reasons for investing this meeting with supreme dignity and importance from its truly religious tone and character. Here we behold a pious king—one who had stood in the first rank as a poet, a musician, a statesman, and a warrior—resigning the sovereignty into the hands of his son, in obedience to the will of God; and, in doing so, giving utterance to sentiments the most noble and pious. See him handing to his anointed successor plans of all the most important parts of the glorious temple which he was appointed to build to the honor of Jehovah. Observe the munificent donations which he and his princes make on the spot for the purpose of carrying out this great object. Hear his noble address prior to the inauguration feast, (1 Chron. xxix, 10-20,) and mark his charge to his son and successor. Chap. xxviii, 9, 10. But these dignified and pious exercises do not terminate when David recedes from the public eye. Follow the aged monarch into his retirement, and see him prostrate before God, praying for Solomon, (Psalm lxxii,) under this special divine teaching, while his mind, by a glorious afflatus of divine influence, is carried out to a contemplation of the glory and triumphs of the Messiah's kingdom, until his rapt spirit loses all sense of want, and his full heart exclaims, "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." Take all these into account, and you have a scene scarcely equaled in sublimity by anything seen in this world prior to the advent of the Messiah. This was the last act of David's life. "He died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor." 1 Chron. xxix, 28.

We are now called upon to take a brief survey of the improvement which the reign of this king secured to his country and kingdom; and especially notice the state of the Israelitish nation with reference to their independence and relative political position; the national wealth and revenue, and their measure of civilization. Their progress in literature, science, and art will be examined at the end of this chapter. Although we indicate these points, we have no hope of giving that amount of information respecting them which may be expected or desired. Our remarks will necessarily be brief, from the limits of our plan; and defective, for want of more ample materials.

1. At the accession of David to the throne, his people could scarcely be called a nation. The Israelites had, indeed, made some vigorous efforts under Saul to secure their independence; but the last and most desperate conflict was unsuccessful. The tribes were disunited. The strongholds of the country were generally either occupied by the garrisons of the Philistines, or other neighboring enemies, or held, like Zion, by armed bodies of the native tribes; and the Hebrews generally were the easy prey of any powerful border chieftain. But, after the son of Jesse had swayed the sceptre forty years, how changed is the scene! Throughout the length and breadth of the whole land allotted to the tribes of Israel, no opponent in arms is found: neither the bordering Phenicians, the native Canaanites, nor the neighboring Philistines, were entirely destroyed; but they were either completely subdued, and placed under tribute, or so deeply impressed with the superior military power of Israel, that they gladly formed alliances of a friendly and commercial character with them, which were productive of great advantage to the descendants of Jacob. Besides this, the neighboring countries had been subdued. Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Syria had been reduced; and the dominion of Israel had, according to the word of the Divine promise, extended from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates.

Not only had the Hebrew nation extended their authority over this wide range of territory, but they were the paramount power in western Asia. The military force of the country, both as it respects numerical amount and discipline, equipment and spirit, proves that the Jews of the period under review occupied this prominent position not simply on account of the weakness of their neighbors. Their power was sufficient to have given them a respectable *status* in any age or part of the world. These important results are very creditable to David's capacity as a statesman and a warrior. He found his people divided, feeble, and trodden down by haughty and inveterate foes. If he did not succeed in fusing the several tribes into one compact and indivisible mass, he neutralized and over-

ruled their division, and, for all practical purposes, brought their united energy and power to bear against every national foe. This fact, instead of depreciating, greatly enhances the character of the king. He raised them, not only to honorable independence, but to give laws to all the surrounding tribes.

2. The national wealth of the Israelites, when David was called to rule over them, must have been very limited. There can be no doubt that when they crossed the Jordan they possessed considerable substance. It is equally probable that this was greatly increased by the spoils of Canaan. Yet, when we take into account the numerous spoliations to which they were subjected in the intermediate period, and the very unfavorable influence which the oft-repeated foreign aggressions exerted upon the creation of wealth, we must consider that at the death of Saul they were a poor as well as a weak people.

At the death of David, however, the case was greatly altered. The many successful wars which this sovereign conducted against neighboring States, had filled the public coffers; while the perfect protection afforded to every local interest had enabled the Israelites to increase private property to a great extent. If we may rely upon the Hebrew numerals which are employed to specify the provision made by David and his princes for the building of the temple, there is an exhibition of national and private wealth, scarcely equaled in the history of any other nation. We are first told that David contributed one hundred thousand talents of gold, and one million talents of silver, besides immense quantities of the inferior metals, whose value was not ascertained. 1 Chron. xxii, 14. Besides this, he gave, out of his private property, three thousand talents of gold, and seven thousand talents of silver. Chap. xxix, 4. This donation he presented out of his own estate, as an incentive to the liberality of the people. His example was followed in the same noble spirit; for his people presented an aggregate contribution of five thousand talents of gold, and ten thousand talents of silver, besides brass, iron, and precious stones. The aggregate sterling value of these contributions has been differently estimated by learned men. Dean Prideaux (Conn., vol. i, p. 5, *note*) says that "it exceeded £800,000,000 of our money;" Lewis, (Antiquities, vol. i, p. 384,) that "it amounted in our money to £837,477,365;" while other commentators compute it at above £1,000,000,000. (Kitto's Illustrated Comm., 1 Chron. xxix, 16.) Josephus, however, reduces the whole amount of the contribution to ten thousand talents of gold, and one hundred thousand of silver; which, according to the last of the preceding calculations, would make the value about £97,500,000 sterling. But, as the

large sums which have been specified have appeared to many persons quite incredible, Jennings suggests that, as the Books of Chronicles, where alone these numbers are found, were certainly written after the return from the Babylonish captivity; so it is probable that these calculations may have been made according to the estimated worth of the Babylonish talent, which would reduce the several amounts to one-half. Without adopting this idea, or the figures of Josephus, it must be evident that, while some persons estimate the Hebrew talent at £7,200, and others as low as £648, no certainty can be attained as to the precise value of these several amounts, which Bedford (*Chronology*, p. 564) supposes to have been equivalent to £75,000,000 sterling.

Yet, whatever difficulty may prevent our estimating the precise amount of these contributions, it is certain they were immense. The gold used in the holy of holies alone was worth £4,500,000 sterling.—*Prideaux's Connection*. The precious metals appear to have been much more abundant in the early ages than they are at present; and when it is known that a few articles of gold presented by Croesus, king of Lydia, to the Delphian oracle, have been valued at £879,547, (*Larcher's Notes on Herodotus*, vol. i, p. 69,) we may fully expect that the provision which enabled Solomon to carry out the whole of this noble plan must have been prodigious.

At the lowest estimate, therefore, it is clearly shown that the Israelites had made remarkable progress in the acquisition of wealth during the reign of David, and were at his death in circumstances which enabled them to occupy an elevated and influential position, in this respect, even in comparison with older and more extensive empires.

We know but little of the revenues of the Hebrew sovereigns, either as to their amount, or the means by which they were raised. At first, when Saul was appointed king, the people who were well-disposed toward him brought presents; which were intended, doubtless, to enable him to support the dignity to which he had been elevated. We have no information of any other means which the first Hebrew king had of meeting the expenses of state. It is unquestionable that at this time the maintenance of those employed in war did not devolve upon the sovereign. They were a militia engaged in the defense of their own families, by whom their wants were supplied. Hence, in conformity to the customs of the time, David is spoken of as sent with provisions to his brethren, and a present to their officer. From these voluntary contributions, which were generally rendered in kind, it is probable Saul derived his chief support. 1 Sam. xvi, 20.

When the kingdom was confirmed in the hand of David, he appears to have greatly extended the royal revenues. One important source of wealth of which he availed himself was, the possession of numerous flocks: Michaëlis thinks they were kept on the pasture-lands bordering on the confines of Israel and Arabia. These were, perhaps, at first the spoil of subdued countries. 1 Sam. xxx, 20. But this branch of property was held in great esteem; for among the principal officers of David we find at least three who were placed in charge of the royal herds. 1 Chron. xxvii, 29, 31.

Another source of revenue arose from the lands, vineyards, olive-yards, and sycamore-grounds possessed by the king. How these were acquired we cannot tell; perhaps to a great extent by confiscations on account of political offenses. We know David disposed of the landed property of Saul. Stewards of the first order in rank were also appointed to watch over this class of royal property. 1 Chron. xxvii, 26-28; 2 Chron. xxvi, 10.

The resources of the sovereign were also greatly augmented by the spoil of vanquished countries. It is certain that David obtained immense treasure in this manner; and especially by the annual tribute rendered by these countries, which must have formed a regular source of very great revenue.

But although, in the peculiar circumstances of David's kingdom, these might be most efficient sources of income, they can scarcely be regarded as regular revenues contributed to sustain the dignity of the crown, and the expenses incident to royalty. It appears even now doubtful whether, on the establishment of monarchy among the Hebrews, there was any agreement by which a regular tax was levied on the kingdom for the use of the king. The monition of Samuel does indeed countenance this opinion. 1 Sam. viii, 15. But if any tax was levied in the days of David, it appears to have consisted mainly in a sufficient supply for the support of the royal household. This was perhaps done by dividing the nation into twelve districts, a captain or treasurer being appointed to each. These were severally charged with furnishing provision for the royal establishment for a month. And thus, each following in rotation, the royal household was regularly and constantly supplied. In the time of David these sources of income were abundantly sufficient for all the wants of the king, and enabled him to amass the vast stores to which we have referred. But it does not appear that he, in any instance, oppressed the people by unreasonable exactions.

3. The state of civilization amongst the Hebrews during this period claims some attention. Two inquiries present themselves; the first, respecting the progressive improvement of the Israelites from

the commencement of the monarchy to the death of David; the second, the relative position, in civilization, which this people held to the rest of the world at the close of this period.

If, in reference to our first question, we take an eminent living writer (Guizot) for our guide, and admit that the first idea comprised in this term "is the notion of progress, of development;" that it includes two elements,—“the progress of society, the progress of individuals,—the amelioration of the social system, and the expansion of the mind and faculties of man;” then it must be admitted that the period of history which has passed under review in the present chapter was the very season which contributed, in a pre-eminent degree, to the civilization of the Hebrew people. See the tone of moral feeling which prevailed during the times of the judges, exhibited not in the conduct of the men of Gibeah to the Levite and his partner, for the morals of this city might be an exception to the general habits of the people; although the manifestation of such behavior in a single instance indicates a very low degree of civilized life:—but see it in the means adopted by this man to rouse the indignant feelings of his fellow-countrymen:—the dead body of the woman, mangled and bloody, sent to the several tribes of Israel! Surely this shows the morality of the public mind to have been very low. Another sad confirmation of this is seen at the end of the government of the judges, in the conduct of the sons of Eli, and of the sons of Samuel. Among a people taught and disciplined as the Israelites had been, such obscene and unjust conduct could not have been manifested in high places, unless the bulk of the population had, to a fearful extent, become ignorant and debased. If further evidence be wanting on this head, it is found in the slavish subjection in which they were held by their Philistine lords. When we know that, beyond the use of a file or a grindstone, no Israelite could sharpen or repair even an agricultural instrument, and that no weapons of war were allowed them; can we conceive of more complete mental debasement, either generally or among individuals?

If, from this state of feeling, morals, and subjection, the mind turns to the condition of the Israelites at the end of David's reign, and remembers that the difference which is so manifest, must be regarded as the result of increasing intelligence and mental energy, we shall perhaps scarcely find a half century in the history of any people which displays a richer measure of individual and collective progress.

Let the list of David's military worthies be considered, and it will be found that their actions evinced not only the greatest martial prowess, but equally generous feeling, nobility of mind, elevated

ardor; and all this in many instances united with the highest professional talent and skill. Nor do we find any deficiency in the civil service of the nation. There is no evidence in the history that the judges and magistracy were at all deficient in intelligence or integrity; and in the higher branches of the affairs of the state, men were found equal to all the duties of the council, and to all the exigencies of the executive government.

Nor was improvement confined merely to one class or section of the people: the public mind, in all its grades, had been thus raised. The various incidents recorded in the history clearly prove this; while the several public troubles and rebellions which clouded the reign of the son of Jesse show, that, mixed with much irregularity and some violence, a spirit distinguished by open-heartedness, liberality, and a just sense of freedom, very extensively prevailed.

Over the kingdom thus elevated and improved, Solomon was, by the special providence of God, called to reign. For this high office he was fitted by extraordinary endowments; and he appears to have begun his reign in a manner which displayed both sterling piety and sound judgment. It is, however, extremely difficult to do justice either to him or his predecessor, from the great obscurity in which the motive and object of certain actions are involved. Such is the case with respect to Adonijah, Shimei, Joab, and Abiathar.

In the first instance, it is not possible for us now to understand the full intent and meaning of Adonijah's request to have Abishag for his wife. Many of our best writers have spoken of Solomon's conduct in this case as the most heartless and cruel; while one actually denounces the person who may take another view of the subject as "an enemy to the cause of God and truth."—*Dr. A. Clarke* on 1 Kings ii, 17. This, however, will not deter us from saying that we regard his conclusion not only as unjustly harsh, but as unwarranted by the history. It must be admitted as an undoubted fact, that Solomon was called to the throne by the express declaration of Jehovah. This Adonijah knew, for he had vainly attempted to frustrate the Divine purpose. He now makes a request to have Abishag for his wife. If this petition meant no more than it expressed, it is not probable that Solomon would have taken the course which he did. The whole account cannot, indeed, be fairly read, without producing the conviction that Solomon regarded this request as a proof that Adonijah still hoped to seize the crown; that he had accomplices who were engaged with him in this purpose; and that this petition was the first of the means to be resorted to for the accomplishment of this end. The Septuagint has given us a version of Solomon's reply to his mother which is preferable to our authorized text:

“Ask for him the kingdom also : for he is my elder brother, and he has Abiathar the priest, and he has Joab the captain-general of the army, his friend.”—*Horsley's Bib. Crit.*, vol. i, p. 367. Does not this language clearly show that the king believed he knew the plan and purpose which dictated this request, and that the support rendered to his brother was so powerful as not to allow any mild measures of precaution to be taken ? If this was Solomon's judgment, founded on a thorough knowledge of the case, then Adonijah merited his doom. As we cannot now know anything of his means of information, so we cannot decide on the accuracy of his judgment. Still, as the case might have been such as we have supposed,—which is indeed probable from the admitted wisdom of Solomon,—so it is possible that his conduct in this instance might have been justifiable.

The fate of Abiathar and Joab rather strengthens this view of the history. The former, summoned before Solomon, is deprived of the high priesthood, and banished to his native city. Solomon's address to him is worthy of remark. He speaks to him as to one who is acknowledged to be guilty of a capital crime ; and, although deserving death, he spares his life from a compassionate regard to the privations and perils which he had shared with David his father. When the wisdom of Solomon is admitted, how can we account for the use of such language, except on the supposition that he had been actually engaged in a new conspiracy with Adonijah ?

In the case of Joab this presumption is still stronger. He is told of the death of Adonijah, and of the exile of Abiathar from court ; and this man of violence and blood, appalled at the danger of his position, flies at once to the tabernacle at Gibeon, and takes hold of the horns of the altar. Did not such conduct imply an acknowledgment of his guilt ? This appears to be confirmed by the text of Scripture which distinctly says, “For Joab had turned after Adonijah.” 1 Kings ii, 28. We do not think that the language quoted refers to the attempt made to seat Adonijah upon the throne before the death of David, but to a settled purpose of carrying out this project ; which being known by Solomon, Joab, self-convicted, fled to the sanctuary, where he was slain by command of the king.

Almost equal exception has been taken to the conduct of Solomon towards Shimei. It is called “a tyrannical restriction on his innocent liberty.”—*Kitto's Bib. Cyclop.*, art. Solomon. We demur to this imputation. We think it must be regarded as an axiom in politics, that every man enjoying the happiness and security of social and civilized society, ought to give up so much of his personal liberty as is absolutely necessary to secure the public well-being. Shimei, then, had proved himself to be a bad man and a bad citizen. He had

acted with the greatest disloyalty toward the king, under circumstances which very greatly aggravated the offense. He himself afterward fully admitted his crime; and the king's friends regarded him as worthy of death. But Shimei was a powerful chief. He came to make confession with a thousand men at his back. Now, we do not plead for the future punishment of this man for his crime; but we do think it justified Solomon in isolating him from his tribe, and placing him under *surveillance* in the city. If, afterwards, he was so infatuated as to violate his pledge, and transgress the royal command, he had only himself to blame; and his case is another proof that when men embark on a course of insubordination and guilt, they may reasonably expect that their sin will find them out.

Solomon, soon after his accession, formed an affinity with the king of Egypt by marrying his daughter. (See *Appendix*, note 61.) He afterward invited all his chief princes, captains, and officers to meet him at a solemn sacrifice before the tabernacle of the Lord at Gibeon. Here the king offered a thousand burnt-offerings, and worshiped before the Lord. In that night God appeared "unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast showed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead. Now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?" 2 Chron. i, 7-10. God graciously approved of this request, and assured him that as he had not asked long life, riches, honor, or the life of his enemies, but wisdom and knowledge, these should be given, with riches and honor beyond all that his predecessors had enjoyed, or what any of his successors should realize.

We recommend those who so loudly declaim against the despotism, cruelty, and injustice of Solomon, during this part of his life, to see how far they can reconcile their opinions with this exhibition of his character. When Jehovah testifies in terms of approval his freedom from vindictive passions, men should pause before they indulge in unqualified censure.

Solomon now entered upon his great work, to which he had been divinely appointed,—the erection of the temple which bore his name. Any minute or architectural description of this structure is foreign to our plan. But it will be necessary to notice a few particulars respecting it. The site of this building David had purchased of Araunah, the Jebusite, to offer sacrifice unto Jehovah, when the angel of death ceased from destroying the Israelites, after David

had sinned in the numbering of the people. This spot, otherwise so desirable, presented great difficulties to the execution of the plan. It was a hill which, on three sides, but especially on the south and east, sloped down precipitously to a very deep valley, through which ran the brook Kedron. The first thing, therefore, was to commence a range of walls at the level of the valley; and, rearing them up to the summit of the hill, to obtain a sufficient space for the erection of the building and its surrounding courts. This work, which required to be done with the largest stones, and in the most substantial manner, was, we are told, so executed.* We find good reason for believing that a part of these identical walls yet remain. As no fire or other means of destroying a building could possibly affect substantial walls raised in this manner, and, in fact, made a part of the everlasting hill; so it is not likely that at any subsequent period the Jews would possess sufficient resources to undertake such a work of supererogation as the removal and rebuilding of these original walls. We are not, however, left to mere induction on this question: a most intelligent traveler has fully investigated the subject; and his proofs are as curious and interesting as they are conclusive. (Robinson's Biblical Researches, vol. i, pp. 427, 428.)

It will be necessary in the next place to notice the plan of the building. Who was the architect? This question deserves an answer on intellectual and scientific grounds: it does so pre-eminently, as one of deep interest to every real believer in the inspiration of the Scriptures. We are at no loss as to who originated the idea of this structure. David has an undoubted claim to this honor. Successful in all his wars, and reposing in his house of cedar, he thought it unsuitable and derogatory to the Divine honor for the ark of God to rest in a tent. It is very probable that another idea strengthened this desire in the mind of the king. He might naturally have thought the light and temporary structure of the tabernacle suitable to the circumstances of the people whilst in the wilderness; but that now, when they had acquired a permanent location, and had obtained wealth and power, so that substantial and ornate dwellings were rising up on every side, the former residence of the seat and centre of their holy religion was altogether unsuitable to their altered condition.

But David not only supplied his son with treasure and materials for the building; he also gave him a pattern or plan of the structure. Whence was this derived? It may first be important to observe that the Hebrew term (בְּנִיָּת) rendered "pattern," is precisely the

* Josephus, Ant., b. xv, ch. ii, sect. 3; Wars, b. v, ch. v, sect. 1.

same as that which the Lord used when he charged Moses to make the sanctuary and its furniture "according to all that I show thee, after the *pattern* of the tabernacle, and the *pattern* of all the instruments thereof." Exod. xxv, 9. Now, it is universally allowed that the instructions which Moses received as to the form and figure of all these things were amply sufficient to enable him to describe them most exactly. The repeated cautions addressed to him suppose this; for they all charge him to construct the holy place and its furniture after the pattern which had been *showed* him in the mount. He had seen or received impressions equivalent to those produced by sight, and was therefore fully acquainted with the plan of the work to be done. Nor can there be any reason why the term here used should be limited to a less measure of knowledge. The entire scope of the passage proves that the information was of the most ample and perfect character. We will not speculate upon the question, whether David gave it to his son by means of verbal description, or in ichnographic delineations. We see no reason to doubt the latter, as it appears most suitable to the requirements of the case. But then whence did David obtain this information and these designs? We say, Most certainly, from Jehovah. Nor do we think this fact would have been doubted, but for the inveterate dislike which the human mind feels to admit Divine interposition, even in the most important and sacred undertakings. On this point the teaching of the Scripture account appears to be most explicit. It informs us that he had this pattern "by the Spirit," 1 Chron. xxviii, 12; that is, by Divine teaching. Lest this language should be mistaken, David further explains himself, and says, "All this the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." Verse 19. In what manner this information was given to David, we are not informed, whether by special revelation in visions, or in any other way; but we are told that the knowledge of the form of the whole building and its several parts which he thus obtained, was not a vague, uncertain impression floating in his imagination, but knowledge so ample and distinct as enabled him to detail the whole in written accounts, and perhaps to exhibit the several parts of the building in a series of architectural designs.

Whatever the reader may think of these views, nothing can be more certain than the fact, that of all the buildings which were ever erected, there is not one which supplies such ample evidence of having been built on a perfect and fully detailed plan, as this celebrated temple. We should consider the great extent of the whole erection, and take into account the peculiarity of the design, and its highly ornamental character; and, moreover, that it "was built of

stone made ready before it was brought thither : so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." 1 Kings vi, 7. To those who are acquainted with the difficulty of executing complicated and extensive buildings from the best working drawings, it will be evident that the fact now referred to, while it proves the excellence of the workmanship and the skill of the artisan, no less clearly demonstrates the perfection, completeness, and detail of the various architectural designs. Altogether, the design and execution afford one of the most splendid exhibitions of cultivated and scientific intellect which the world has ever seen.

In the prosecution of this work Solomon followed the example of his father, and procured from the king of Tyre some of his most talented artificers and workers in metals. The remains of the native Canaanitish tribes, who had been reduced to servitude, were engaged in the most laborious parts of this work : their number is estimated at 153,600, of whom 70,000 were employed to bear burdens, 80,000 engaged as hewers of wood in the mountains, and 3,600 were intrusted with the oversight of the others.

Besides these, Solomon made a levy of thirty thousand Hebrews, who were sent to Lebanon to assist in preparing the timber. These did not indeed labor continuously, but in courses, ten thousand at a time, so that each man was at work one month, and at home two months. 1 Kings v, 13, 14. These complicated arrangements were continued for several years, on the most perfect and systematic plan. The stones were fully worked, and each prepared for its respective position. Every beam was in like manner fitted for its place. For this purpose multitudes were employed in the mountains ; and the wood thus prepared was sent down to the sea, and then floated, perhaps to Joppa, by which means the land-carriage would be reduced to about twenty-five miles. To sustain these laborers, and remunerate Hiram for the service of his servants, Solomon supplied the king of Tyre, year by year, with twenty thousand measures of wheat, twenty thousand measures of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil. 2 Chron. ii, 10.

Seven years and six months' continued labor completed this work. But, particular as the sacred account appears to be, there is so much difficulty connected with an exact interpretation of the technical terms employed, and so many important points are omitted, that no clear and complete description has yet been given of this celebrated building ; nor does it fall within our province to attempt it. We may just observe, that the part specially devoted to Divine service was on the same general plan as the tabernacle, only larger ;

for, whereas in the sacred tent the most holy place was but ten cubits square, in the temple it was twenty. In like manner here the holy place was twenty cubits wide and forty long, instead of ten wide and twenty long. Before the holy place was a porch, or vestibule, twelve cubits deep, and twenty wide. This most sacred part of the edifice was important, not from its size, (for in this respect it has been exceeded by many buildings in every civilized country, and by numerous churches in our own,) but from the elaborate, costly, and highly decorative character of its entire interior and furniture; and also in the number, extent, and grandeur of its surrounding courts, chambers, walls, and towers. Nor can it be doubted that the design of these was elegant and harmonious, and the execution perfect.

Having finished the temple, and provided it with every necessary article for religious worship to be performed there, devised and executed on the same scale of costly magnificence as the building itself, the whole was dedicated to the service of God. The manner and results of this service will be given in the next chapter.

The resources which had been expended on this great work Solomon afterwards applied to the erection of a palace, or rather palaces, for himself. It does not appear probable that he engaged as many persons in these works as had been employed on the temple, but they occupied nearly twice as much time, probably in consequence of the minute elaboration of the costly materials with which they were adorned. The temple was seven years and a half in building; the palaces occupied twelve years and a half; so that twenty years of Solomon's reign were thus employed. (Compare 1 Kings vii, 1, with 2 Chron. viii, 1.) We need not detail the splendor and magnificence of these works. They all contributed to display the power and wealth of the Jewish monarch and people in this the season of their greatest prosperity.

The enormous expenditure required for these immense undertakings appears to have exhausted even the treasury of Solomon, and he was consequently compelled to levy unusual taxes on his people. 1 Kings ix, 15. It has been conjectured that a part of this taxation was levied to pay the king of Tyre, who, during the progress of these works, had not only furnished Solomon with cedar-trees and fir-trees, but with "gold according to all his desire;" to repay which, when these works were finished, Solomon presented to Hiram twenty cities, which are stated to have been in the land of Galilee. Verse 11. But it is certain they could not have been within the allotted Israelitish territory, for in that case Solomon could not have alienated them. They were, in fact, beyond the original frontier, and had not previously been occupied by Israelites.

2 Chron. viii, 2. Hiram, when he saw this district, refused it, and returned the cities to Solomon, calling them *Cabul*, in all probability, a term of derision or dissatisfaction. It is not unreasonable to suppose that, this compensation being rejected, Solomon would have to repay the gold at least, in a direct manner, and thus be compelled to increase the amount of his taxation.

But whatever difficulty Solomon felt in meeting the demands made upon his exchequer by the erection of these costly works, his plans and purposes were far from being accomplished. His acute and energetic mind, therefore, grasped the difficulty and glory which stood in his way. He saw that the Phenicians, with a very limited territory, had raised themselves to considerable power and opulence by their commercial pursuits; and he determined to avail himself of the advantage which the geographical position of his country and his great military resources supplied, to follow in the same track. The circumstances of the case would have urged this course upon a mind much less sagacious than that of Solomon. Long before the time of this Hebrew king, the Phenicians had, by their maritime and commercial efforts, obtained extensive wealth and influence: this tide of prosperity, in all probability, continued, notwithstanding the invasion of Palestine by the Israelites, until the time of David. For, although the conquests of Joshua might have circumscribed their territory, and have led to the emigration of detached bodies, it is certain that the power of the Phenicians was not broken by Joshua, and that it remained intact after his time. It is probable that their commercial importance and prosperity steadily increased until the military prowess of David had established the dominion of Israel over Palestine, and made it paramount from the Euphrates to the sea, from Egypt to Antioch. This event must have produced a great effect upon the commercial operations of the Phenicians. By their navy they still held almost undisputed possession of the trade of the western world. They were the merchants of Egypt, Greece, Spain, and Britain; but that important branch of commerce which, in every age of the world, has raised to the highest pitch of wealth and power the people who have from time to time possessed it, was by political changes placed in the power of the kings of Israel. The trade of India and the East could now only be prosecuted by the consent, and under the protection, of David and Solomon.

This undoubted fact explains the kindness which the kings of Tyre appear constantly to have shown to these sovereigns of Israel. While the countries through which alone caravans could pass to the Eastern world were ruled by the Jewish sceptre, there was ample reason why the merchant governors of Tyre should conciliate to the

utmost those who held it. There can be little doubt that David, in return for their friendship, afforded the Tyrians ample protection. His life had been too much occupied with military affairs, and the state of his kingdom during the greater part of his reign was too unsettled, to allow him opportunity to turn in a more direct manner to the benefit of his kingdom the advantages arising out of its favorable commercial position. Solomon, however, ascended the throne under more favorable auspices; and when the stupendous works in which he had been engaged had drained his exchequer, he determined, as a means of replenishing it, to improve the commercial advantages which were within his reach.

We have already seen (*Patriarchal Age*, p. 488) that so early as the time of Jacob, caravans laden with the spices of India, and the balsams and myrrh of Hydramaut, passed through Canaan on their way to Egypt; and Dr. Vincent (*Comm. and Nav. of Anc.*, vol. ii, p. 365) regarded this as the oldest line of communication with the East. Now, however, when the dominion of Solomon extended from Lebanon to the eastern branch of the Red Sea, the whole of this traffic was carried through his territory. And as the Egyptians do not appear to have cultivated maritime arts themselves, mainly depending on the Tyrians for a commercial marine, there was little opportunity of turning this trade into another channel. The wise king of Israel therefore resolved to lay hold of the golden prize thus placed before him.

The sacred history records the preparation for this course of action in these words: "And Solomon built Gezer, and Bethhoron the nether, and Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness." 1 Kings ix, 17, 18. The two former cities are not important; but Tadmor in the wilderness, afterward called Palmyra, clearly shows the design and object of the Israelitish king. (*Heeren on Phenicians*, p. 122.) This remarkable city was built on an oasis in the great desert of Syria, on a well-watered and fruitful island which was surrounded by an immense ocean of sand. This spot was situate, according to the best authorities, about twenty leagues west of the Euphrates, and about fifty from Aleppo and Damascus. The prominent fact, however, which casts light upon the design of Solomon in this enterprise is, that all the commercial roads from Damascus to the Euphrates ran by Palmyra. (*Josephus, Ant.*, b. viii, ch. vi, sect. 1.) By the erection of Tadmor, therefore, it is evident that Solomon brought the entire commerce between India and western Asia into his power, and placed it under his protection. The wealth which resulted from this traffic may be inferred from the lasting prosperity of this city, which continued to flourish, and at length aspired to the govern-

ment of central Asia. By this means Solomon made the route between Palestine and Babylon much more safe and convenient, and thus succeeded in obtaining an influence over the lucrative and extensive commercial intercourse which had long existed between India and western Asia. This would be productive of a large revenue to the Hebrew king, while it also afforded immense advantage to his allies, the Tyrian princes, who commanded the maritime trade of Egypt and Europe.

Besides Tadmor, the sacred writer says that Solomon built Baalath. The application of this name to any known ancient city was long doubtful. Happily, by the successful geographical researches of modern times, this doubt is removed, and in the Baalath of the Scriptures is now recognized the great Baalbec whose Roman ruins excite so much astonishment even at the present day. In support of this opinion it may be observed, that the traditions of all the inhabitants of the country, whether Jews, Christians, or Mahometans, affirm with confidence that this city was founded by Solomon. This in itself is a very important circumstance; and it is supported by other weighty reasons. "That Solomon's dominion did include this vale, there is every reason to suppose; and the distance northward does not form any objection; for Tadmor is more to the north, and twice as distant from Jerusalem. In the present text (2 Chron. viii, 6) are named the cities of Tadmor in the wilderness, upper and lower Bethhoron, and Baalath; and the account then goes on to say, that Solomon built whatever he desired in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. This renders it likely that, being thus classed, one of the principal cities named in the text was in Lebanon; and this could only be Baalath; for Tadmor was in the wilderness, and the Bethhorons in the heart of Palestine; and if Baalath was in Lebanon, the analogy of name concurring with the local tradition would refer us to the present Baalbec as the only probable site. Further, the name Baalath means 'the city of Baal,' or 'of the sun;' for Baal was the sun: and it is agreed that Baalbec is the city which was known to the ancients by the name of Heliopolis, 'the city of the sun,' being merely a translation of the ancient native name of Baalath. The present name Baalbec has but a slight shade of different meaning, being 'the valley of Baal,' or 'of the sun.' Thus all these names seem to refer to the same place, Baalath being the ancient native name, Baalbec the slight modern variation, and Heliopolis the classical translation."—*Kitto's Illustrated Commentary*, 2 Chron. viii, 6.

By means of these cities Solomon would have brought under his immediate control the entire commercial traffic with the East, and

thus be enabled to share with his merchant allies in the gains of this most lucrative trade. Heeren, with great show of reason, supposes that the caravans assembled at Baalbec, this being the point of departure. Three days' journey would then bring them to Emesa, (Hems,) which stood on the borders of the desert; then, by four or five days' journey through this wilderness of sand, they would reach Palmyra; from this resting-place, three or four days' journey would bring them to the Euphrates at Thapsacus. (Heeren on the Phenicians, p. 123.)

In addition to the reasons which have been incidentally adduced for placing the starting-point of the caravans so far to the north, it may be observed that this route removed the course of this trade, as far as possible, from Egypt, while it placed it near the commercial ports of Phenicia. But, beside these advantages, it must not be forgotten that the Phenicians had a considerable trade with the north of Europe and Asia, which passed through Armenia, and the district between the Euxine and the Caspian Seas. Baalbec would therefore lie exactly in the route over which this trade also would pass to its *entrepôt* at Tyre. By the erection of this city in the valley of Lebanon, the Hebrew monarch would not only obtain a starting-point for the Indian caravans within his own dominions, but also secure an interest in all the commerce of the north; and thus, by making all the land-trade of the Phenicians pass through the Hebrew territory, secure to his own kingdom a share in all its gains. The sites of these cities, therefore, appear to have been selected with consummate skill, and as the leading features of a great plan, intended to embrace the most important traffic of the world.*

The commercial enterprise of Solomon and his allies reached far beyond this land-trade. When David subdued Edom, he extended the dominion of Israel to the eastern branch of the Red Sea. Having thus access to the ocean, Solomon, by the aid of his Phenician allies, determined to avail himself of this additional advantage. The sacred narrative gives this account of the proceeding: "And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon." 1 Kings ix, 26-28.

This commercial enterprise displays in a remarkable manner the

* It is at least worthy of remark, that Benjamin of Tudela says that Baalbec and Tadmor were originally built on the same plan. The latter place contained four hundred Jews in his time. *Buckingham's Arab Tribes*, p. 488.

uncommon capacity of the Hebrew king. 'The overland commercial intercourse between Egypt and India, according to the judgment of a high authority, existed even before the time of Abraham. (See *Vincent's Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients*, vol. ii, p. 365.) But the journey was tedious, and the caravans were so constantly exposed to enormous exactions, or to violence and plunder, that when navigation became generally known and practised, it seems obvious that Egypt would endeavor to obtain access to the seat of oriental wealth by sea; and, as Dr. Vincent justly infers, we must suppose this maritime intercourse between Egypt and India to have existed in very remote times, "whether history records it or not." (*Ibid.*, p. 366.)

The project of Solomon, therefore, to open a commercial intercourse with India by sea, was, in all probability, borrowed from the Egyptians; and these are supposed to have been preceded in the navigation of the Red Sea by the Edomites; (see *Huet's Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients*, p. 13;) but it was nevertheless a grand effort to obtain a national advantage, which nothing but a combination of the greatest talent and energy could have rendered successful.

The first requisites would be a port and a navy. The complete conquest of Edom placed Ezion-geber, situated at the head of the eastern arm of the Red Sea, within the dominions of the Hebrew king. This, although not a very safe or commodious harbor, was selected as the best that could be obtained. A still greater difficulty existed,—to procure vessels of sufficient size and strength to undertake this long and dangerous voyage. The neighborhood supplied no wood suitable for the purpose, nor artificers equal to their construction. But Solomon had before proved the maritime power and mechanical skill of his friends at Tyre. He therefore made them his partners in the enterprise. Wood prepared for building the necessary vessels was taken from Tyre to Gaza, and thence carried across the country to Ezion-geber, where a number of Phenician ship-builders had been sent to construct the vessels, and prepare them for their voyage.* This work was regarded as so difficult and important, that Solomon went to Ezion-geber in person, to aid those employed on it by his counsel, and encourage them by his presence.

The ships, being thus prepared, proceeded on their voyage, having a supply of Phenician mariners, and a sufficient number of Hebrews, to aid the operations, and to defend the fleet from any aggression. The voyage was successfully prosecuted until the expedition reached Ophir, which appears to have been the principal seat of these com-

* See Laborde's *Mount Sinai and Petrea*, p. 301. Also Appendix, note 62.

mercial operations. (See *Appendix*, note 63.) Having completed the cargo, the fleet returned in safety in the third year, laden with the most costly productions of the East. Besides an immense importation of gold, and an abundance of spices, almug-trees, and precious stones,—silver and ivory, apes and peacocks, were the valuable products of this enterprise. Thus did Solomon succeed in establishing a direct commercial intercourse with the East, which not only brought great riches into his treasury, but also spread abroad his fame to the most distant regions.

One interesting result of this latter circumstance is given in connection with this part of the history. The queen of Sheba, having heard in her own land of the wisdom, works, and magnificence of Solomon, journeyed to Jerusalem in great state, bearing presents of immense value, to satisfy her curiosity, and to ascertain whether the reports which she had heard of the wealth and glory of the Hebrew king were true. The result was, her infinite surprise and gratification. When she had seen and heard the king, and witnessed all his glory, she said, “It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.” 1 Kings x, 6, 7.

The visit of this princess stands out so prominently in the history of this reign, and is referred to in such terms by Jesus Christ, (Matt. xii, 42; Luke xi, 31,) that it becomes necessary to ascertain as accurately as possible the country from whence she came, which is said to have been in “the uttermost parts of the earth;” and the means by which, in this remote country, she could have heard so much of Solomon as to have induced her to undertake this long journey for the purpose of seeing him.

The clear and ample elucidation which this obscure and difficult portion of Scripture history has received from the lights of modern science, is worthy of observation. It has been already shown that Ophir, the seat of the Hebrew factory, and the centre of Solomon’s oriental trade, was on the south-east corner of the Arabian peninsula, extending from Cape Ras-al-Had nearly half way to the Straits of Ormus. It may now be stated that it is proved, with equal clearness, that Sheba, from whence this Arabian queen came, was bounded on the south by the land of Ophir, and extended thence northward to the Eblitæi Montes, which terminate at the Straits of Ormus. (See *Appendix*, note 64.) These geographical facts explain the singular manner in which the circumstances relating to the queen of Sheba are mixed up in the sacred narrative with the account of Solomon’s

commercial expedition to the East. Whether the record in the Book of Kings, or that in the Chronicles, be consulted, this will be found to be the fact. The latter Scripture (2 Chron. viii, 17, 18) gives a history of the efforts of Solomon, by the aid of Hiram, to organize the expedition to Ophir. This is immediately followed by an account of the queen of Sheba's visit and present; (chap. ix, 1-9;) then follow the successful results of the commercial enterprise. Verses 10, 11. This, again, is succeeded by the kindness of Solomon to the queen, and her return home. Verse 12. There must be some reason for this strange interweaving of these two narratives; and it is found in the fact, that the territory of this princess was adjoining the seat of the Hebrew trade: she would, therefore have constant opportunities of hearing glowing accounts of the wisdom and splendor of the sovereign of Israel, until at length she determined to journey to Jerusalem to gratify her curiosity. The manner in which the facts are recorded, as Mr. Forster justly observes, is such "as to leave no reasonable ground for doubt, that the memorable voyage in question, and her still more memorable journey to Jerusalem, stand mutually related as cause and effect." *Historical Geography of Arabia*, vol. i, p. 162.

But, although notice has been taken of the several commercial operations which Solomon is recorded to have undertaken, and which greatly extended the fame and wealth of the Hebrew nation, there is yet another branch of trade, of which no records remain as connecting it with the Hebrews, but which must, nevertheless, at this period, have fallen into their hands.

Those who have investigated the subject with great labor and learning, have found sufficient evidence to "induce a belief that, in the very earliest ages, even prior to Moses, the communication with India was open; that the intercourse with that continent was in the hands of the Arabians; that Thebes had owed its splendor to that commerce; and that Memphis rose from the same cause to the same pre-eminence."—*Vincent's Com. and Nav.*, vol. ii, p. 66. "But," says the same authority, "if Arabia was the centre of this commerce, Petra was the point to which all the Arabians tended from the three sides of their vast peninsula: here, upon opening the oldest history in the world, we find the Ishmaelites from Gilead conducting a caravan of camels loaded with the spices of India, the balsam and myrrh of Hydrant; and, in the regular course of their traffic, proceeding to Egypt for a market."—*Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 262. The possession of Edom, therefore, not only gave Solomon the means of opening a commercial intercourse with the East by sea, but also placed in his hands, and subjected to his control, the great highway over which

the oldest and most important traffic of ancient times had for ages regularly passed.

It is scarcely possible to imagine anything more complete in plan, or successful in execution, than this mercantile policy of Solomon. Egypt had previously been the commercial warehouse of the western world, while the Phenicians of Tyre were the maritime carriers who from thence supplied the market of Europe. The conquests of David, having extended the sway of the Hebrew sceptre from Egypt to the Euphrates, and from Hamath to the Red Sea, left Solomon with ample territorial possessions for the most extended schemes of commercial policy. He fully availed himself of these advantages. By building Baalbec he obtained an interest in the great northern trade; by means of Palmyra he secured the traffic of Babylon, Persia, and Central Asia; through his maritime enterprise at Ezion-geber he obtained access to the gold-coast of Arabia and India; while the possession of Petra gave him the old land-trade of Arabia. In the prosecution of this wide range of operations, Solomon largely availed himself of the mercantile experience and naval resources of the Phenicians of Tyre; and these, aware of the territorial position and political supremacy of the Hebrew king, found it their interest to enter into his schemes of commercial enterprise, secure of deriving to themselves an extended market for their manufactures, additional employment for their marine, as well as of sharing in the profits of this multifarious trade. The effect of this policy, however, was very different upon Egypt. This ancient nation, which had hitherto largely participated in the profits of oriental traffic, was, by these measures of the Hebrew king, completely isolated from the eastern world. The territory of Solomon, stretching from the borders of the Mediterranean to the banks of the Red Sea, effectually cut off Egypt from all commercial intercourse with the East by land, which might be incompatible with the mercantile interest of the Hebrews; while the occupation of the Red Sea, and the navigation of the Eastern Ocean, by the Hebrew-Phenician marine, must have been equally fatal to any profitable prosecution of this object by sea. The consequences of this deprivation to the welfare of Egypt must have been great, and the results are clearly discernible in the alteration which took place in the bearing of Egypt toward Israel during the reign of Solomon. (See *Appendix*, note 65.)

By these successful efforts Solomon became as celebrated for his riches as for his wisdom; he exceeded all the kings of the earth. Silver in Jerusalem was as abundant as stones, and cedars as sycamore-trees. Nor need we wonder at this, when we are informed that the gold brought from Ophir in one voyage amounted to four

hundred and fifty talents, equal to above three millions sterling. This might not be net profit, as many commodities would have been exchanged for it, and much expense incurred by the voyage: we are, however, told that the annual revenue of gold that came to him was six hundred and threescore and six talents, or nearly five millions sterling. This was exclusive of the revenue he received as duties from those who conducted commercial operations on their own account, as well as of the tribute paid him by those kings who were subject to his government, and of the ordinary revenue of the empire. The large sum just mentioned appears to have been the annual accumulation of gold arising from the king's mercantile transactions alone.

Thus did the Lord show what he could do for his people. Territory, population, political ascendancy, commercial success, superabundant wealth, were all theirs. They stood on high,—alone amongst the nations. This prosperity invested the name of Solomon with the greatest glory, and spread his fame through the remotest parts of the East; whilst the riches thus acquired elevated the Jewish people, and made them objects of interest and importance to all surrounding nations. Many foreigners, and even sovereign princes, were, in consequence, induced to visit Jerusalem, to test the profound wisdom of the royal sage, and to admire the wonderful buildings which the talents, taste, and riches of Solomon had raised. Nor were the several arrangements made for the government of the country unworthy the wisdom of the sovereign. The royal household was conducted in the most perfect order, and on a scale of surpassing magnificence: "All king Solomon's drinking-vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon." 1 Kings x, 21. The arrangements for conducting public business, the management of the tributary resources of the empire, the relation of the Jewish kingdom to foreign nations, and the guards devised against intestine disorder and foreign invasion, all showed the wisdom of counsel and energy of intellect which governed in Jerusalem.

But the man who surveys this scene under the influence of those views and principles which are inspired by the word and Spirit of truth, will see in this the most melancholy period of Jewish history. Here, it is true, we have a proof of the existence of talents of the highest order; the results of their development we have just noticed; the richest benedictions of Providence rested on their exercise: but how sad and fearful are the accompanying and collateral aberrations of this mighty spirit!

The gifts with which Solomon was invested, the success and riches with which he was favored, instead of leading him to a more earnest and humble devotedness to God, turned away his heart from the divine law; his people, it is to be feared, partook of his spirit; and the germs of universal disorder, the seeds of national ruin, were, as the necessary result, cast into the soil of the Hebrew commonwealth. The first evidences of this defection were seen in the extravagant state and unreasonable display with which Solomon surrounded the throne. God had said by his servant Moses, of the future king of Israel, "He shall not multiply horses to himself: neither shall he multiply wives to himself: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold." Deut. xvii, 16, 17. In all these respects the conduct of Solomon was a continual and flagrant violation of the Divine will. He "had horses brought out of Egypt" in such numbers, that he "had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen." 1 Kings x, 28; 2 Chron. ix, 25. This cavalry, in a hilly country like Judea, and in a time of profound peace, could only have been kept for mere show, and therefore evidenced as much extravagance, folly, and pride, as impiety. The transgressions of Solomon were not confined to this form of evil: "He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines." 1 Kings xi, 3. One thousand women! Again: his accumulation of silver and gold was so great, that it became proverbial; its display was prodigious: he had "three hundred shields of beaten gold,"* and two hundred targets of the same metal.† The value of his throne of ivory overlaid with gold we cannot estimate. 1 Kings x, 16-19. As the prohibitions of the law were not formed without good reason, so these transgressions operated prejudicially, not only by drawing down the Divine malediction, but also by their natural influence and effect.

The riches thus acquired by Solomon proved injurious to his public character, and inimical to the interests of his country. It may be fairly questioned whether any of the productive causes are calculated to be as extensively useful to a people as that of commerce. But this result can only be where trade is in the hands of a people, and not a royal monopoly, as it was in Judea. Not that all merchandise was engrossed by the king and his servants, for dealers and chapmen were tolerated; but as these were subject to a taxation which was not likely to be light, their trade was probably not very extensive. It is, however, certain that the most important and productive branches of trade were carried on for the benefit of the king. This course, in itself, must have put the sovereign in a false posi-

* The gold in these has been estimated at £210,976.

† Worth £28,131.

tion. Instead of standing out as the governor, protector, and ruler of the nation, he appeared as one who, at fearful odds, competed with his subjects in the attainment of wealth. His success, therefore, must have engendered ill-will, while the gorgeous display of his abundant riches rendered the people impatient of the ordinary taxes which were levied for the maintenance of the government. This would be, in itself, a great evil; but there is reason for believing that the continued and extensive buildings of Solomon, coupled with his gorgeous mode of living, and otherwise extravagant expenditure, obliged him to make these burdens very severe. At all events, his counsellors thought them too oppressive. 1 Kings xii, 4-7.

But this was not the only evil to which the kingdom was exposed from the conduct of the sovereign. His transgression in the case of his wives was fatal to his piety and his fame. His absurd conduct in carrying out the practices of oriental royalty, by having a thousand women shut up in his harem, would have been sufficient to damage the fairest reputation, had no worse consequences proceeded from this conduct. But, alas! the result justified the reason for the command already referred to: these wives turned away his heart from God. "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods." 1 Kings xi, 4-8.

We regard this subject simply as one of history; and in this aspect it appears most extraordinary. Solomon, who had been so specially favored by Jehovah; in answer to whose prayer, at the dedication of the temple, fire came down from heaven, and the glory of the Lord filled the house; this divinely-appointed sovereign, who had been specially invested by God with wisdom and power, in the fullness of his days, denies his Lord, sinks into idolatry, profanes Jerusalem, and, as if to carry his impiety to its utmost extent, selects the hill on the other side of the brook Kedron, directly opposite to the temple of God, and there institutes the foul and filthy orgies of idolatry!

Here, however, we see the peculiar theocratic position of the Israelitish people. In any other case we might reasonably have expected that such conduct would have led to effeminacy, social disorder, political weakness, and national danger. It did so in this case;

for a youth named Hadad, "son of the prince of Edom, whose forces Joab had subdued, found refuge in Egypt, where, during some years, he watched the course of events; and finding at length that the king of Israel, by his licentious life and arbitrary government, had forfeited the good-will of his subjects, he formed an alliance with Rezon, a freebooter, by whose aid he ascended the throne of Jobah, and forthwith prepared for war against the Hebrews."—*Russell's Conn.*, vol. iii, p. 49. By these means Syria and a part of Edom were wrested from the dominion of Solomon, and the tranquillity of his reign disturbed. This might have been expected; but the flagrant conduct of the successor of David led to more direct Divine interposition.

Jeroboam was a young man of Ephraim, of great capacity, and "a mighty man of valor:" his talents brought him into notice, and Solomon made him chief over those of his tribe who were employed by the king in building Millo, and repairing the breaches of the city of David.* 1 Kings xi, 27, 28. While thus engaged, Ahijah the prophet met him in the field; and while they were alone together, the prophet took from Jeroboam a new mantle which he was wearing; and, having torn it into twelve pieces, gave him ten of them, saying, "Take these ten pieces: for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: because that they have forsaken me, and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways. Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand; but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose. But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem. And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, and will give Israel unto thee." 1 Kings xi, 31–38. Thus it is seen that the division of the kingdom was not left to the natural operation of those agencies which the extravagance and licentiousness of Solomon had produced: it was primarily a judicial infliction for rebellion against God.

* From this it appears that, in the latter part of his life, Solomon did employ even Israelites to labor on his public works.

It is more than probable that Jeroboam, encouraged by this declaration of the prophet, was too eager to seize the promised prize, and unwilling to wait, according to the word of the prophet, for the death of Solomon. He therefore determined to hasten this event, and "lifted up his hand against the king." Verse 27. The attempt failed, and Jeroboam fled into Egypt; which country, notwithstanding Solomon's marriage with a princess of the royal family, appears at this time to have been the great asylum for political offenders, and exiles from Judea. Here Hadad and Jeroboam were protected and supported.

In these circumstances Solomon died. It may be questioned whether ever monarch or man entered upon life with so much promise, who departed under the shadow of a deeper gloom. Invested with every attribute of mind necessary to form a great character, with wisdom, a special gift of Heaven, he stood out in his youth as a meteor-mind among the children of men. In the science of government he was taught of God; and, grasping the mighty elements of his people and country, he raised both to the highest pitch of greatness. Although one thousand and four of his poems have perished, the solitary remnant entitles him to a high degree of poetic fame. His natural philosophy was not confined to a mere acquaintance with the different kinds of animals and plants; he had penetrated the secrets of their nature, dived into the recesses of their being, and explored and exhibited a world of truth for the instruction of his generation. Much of this, too, has perished; but enough remains to justify our remark. As a moral philosopher, few in our world will stand higher than the author of Ecclesiastes, and still fewer evince a wider range of knowledge than is presented to us in the Proverbs. Yet, with all these advantages, this fairest specimen of humanity prostrated his noble powers, and died without honor. Perhaps in no other instance do we so clearly see the paralyzing effects of unfaithfulness to God and vicious pursuits upon the judgment, the heart, and the character. His insatiable thirst for pomp and parade led him to grasp, as a royal privilege, commercial resources, which, if thrown open to his people, under wise encouragement and protection, would have laid the foundation of durable national greatness. His gorgeous buildings, golden shields, and unequalled array of unlimited magnificence, were bought too dear, when the judgment of the wisest of his people frowned condemnation on his pride, and the affections of his best subjects were alienated by seeing him purchase the most unnecessary, extravagant, and unheard-of gratifications at the expense of their peace, privation, and labor. This state of things could only arise out of his flagrant unfaithfulness to God. We shall speak of this

in another place; and therefore simply remark that, knowing, as Solomon did, the great purpose of Jehovah in the redemption and establishment of the Jewish people, it is beyond everything marvellous that he should have countenanced and supported idolatry. This sealed his doom, poisoned the life-blood of his political power, and, gathering the gloom of death over the last years of his reign, made that period the type and the prelude of all the humiliation, wretchedness, and woe which afterwards fell upon the Jewish people.

After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam ascended the throne. But while the people prepared for his inauguration, they preferred a mild, modest, and reasonable plea for a reform in the administration of the government. They said, "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee." 2 Chron. x, 4. The young king commanded them to come again in three days for his reply. In the mean time he consulted the aged counselors of the late king, who advised him to conciliate his people with good words. This counsel not being agreeable to Rehoboam, he next advised with young men, who had been brought up with him; and their advice was, "Thus shalt thou answer the people that spake unto thee, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. For whereas my father put a heavy yoke upon you, I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." Verses 10, 11. This rash and unreasonable course was pursued; and when the young sovereign gave his reply, the people of the ten tribes immediately retired, proclaiming their determination to abjure the rule of the house of David. As had been predicted, this revolt was complete and successful. When Rehoboam sent his collector to receive the taxes from these tribes, they stoned him to death; and afterward Rehoboam having assembled an army to reduce them to subjection, the Lord sent a prophet to forbid the people from marching against their brethren. So Rehoboam was compelled to limit his rule to Judah and Benjamin, while Jeroboam, whom they had invited from Egypt, reigned over the other ten tribes.

The progress of this people, from the accession of Saul to the division of the kingdom, presents to us not only a deeply interesting chapter of Hebrew history, but an equally remarkable portion of the interposition of God in human affairs. We have seen how the Divine purpose to establish a pure theocracy failed through the unfaithfulness of the people. The establishment of a limited monarchy succeeded: a monarchy limited, not by constitutional rule or popular representation, but by Divine law and Divine interposition. The

events which have passed under our notice give us the issue of this new experiment. And what is the result? We have seen how, by the protection and blessing of Heaven upon the daring energy of David, and the mighty genius of Solomon, Israel rose to unexampled prosperity and power. When, in any age, did a people occupying so limited a territory, in so short a time rise to such eminence in martial prowess, the science of government, learned distinction, and commercial prosperity? What means all this? Does it not teach us, that if, under these new circumstances, Israel had been faithful to God, he could and would have made them, not only the greatest nation upon earth, but the medium through which he would dispense the blessings of his providence and the riches of his grace to all mankind? But for the reign of Solomon, we should never have seen the adaptation of the Hebrew territory to secure national distinction. Under his sway it stands before us as the centre of the world's religion and civilization, and as displaying elements of greatness, and agencies of usefulness, of unspeakable grandeur and extent. But as, in the former case, the unfaithfulness of the people blasted their hopes and ruined Israel, so here, the infidelity and licentiousness of the sovereign covered him with infamy, and hurled his nation into ruin. We wonder to see Israel so suddenly rise to opulence and power, so readily stretch forth her hands, and grasp the commerce of the world. Alas! the rapidity of Israel's elevation is only equalled by the suddenness of her fall, and the depth of her disaster. And as a great master of strategy will effect the greatest results by the smallest manœuvre, so Divine Providence here accomplishes the prostration of Israel by unexpected and apparently unimportant means. Ten tribes revolt, and make an able and energetic young man their king; while a wandering prince obtains sufficient power to wrest Syria from the dominion of Israel. These objects are secured without the desolations of war, or any important national humiliation or loss; and at first we do not see why these circumstances should greatly affect Hebrew prosperity. Yet, unimportant as these changes appear, the hand of Heaven had produced them, and they were pregnant with terrible consequences. The division of the kingdom not only destroyed Hebrew unity, but ruined Hebrew commerce. By isolating Ezion-geber, Petra, and Jerusalem from Tyre, and cutting off all direct communication with Phenicia, it consequently became impossible to continue that maritime commerce with the East which had poured a flood of wealth into Israel. The same means gradually destroyed the overland traffic with Arabia, so that the kingdom of Judah lost her commercial *status* at once. But it may be said, "Israel still possessed the advantage of Phenician

connection." Yes; but to little purpose: for, Israel being unable to keep Syria in subjection, this new power interposed its authority between Baalbec and Palmyra; and all the Babylonish trade became, in consequence, subject to Syrian control, and therefore lost to Israel. Thus by these two means did consequences result to the Hebrews more terrible than any political convulsion, more ruinous than any defeat in war. The whole system of commercial polity, which Solomon had contrived with so much wisdom, and brought into successful operation, and which, like a net-work of arteries, diffused life and wealth among the Hebrew people, was in this way severed by the hand of Jehovah, and national decay and commercial ruin were the results. We shall henceforth have to consider the Hebrew people as divided into two minor states.

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CHAPTER V.

THE RELIGION OF THE HEBREWS, FROM THEIR ENTRANCE INTO CANAAN TO THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.

THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM COMMUNICATED TO THE HEBREWS IN THE WILDERNESS, divinely attested, and the People trained to its Observance—Specially enforced by Divine Interposition when the Israelites entered Canaan—The Fidelity of the Hebrews during the Government of Joshua, and the Elders who were contemporary with him—Religious Corruption introduced by Micah—The Evil extended by the Danites—and continued by Gideon—at length issues in open and avowed Idolatry—The Nature of this Evil, and its fearful Consequences—The Conduct of Jephthah—Low State of Religion in Israel at the time of Eli—Samuel, his Piety, and prophetic Inspiration—Labors to reform the People, and restore the Worship of Jehovah—RELIGIOUS WORSHIP DURING THIS PERIOD—The Tabernacle set up in Shiloh—The Ark, taken by the Philistines, when restored, not returned to the Tabernacle, but deposited in a Tabernacle built for the purpose by David on Mount Zion—The Worship established there a remarkable Innovation in the ceremonial Law—Its several Parts, and spiritual Character—THE TEMPLE BUILT, its Dedication, Manifestation of Divine Glory, and Descent of Fire on the Altar—Effects of these Events on the public Mind—Did the Worship in David's Tabernacle continue after the Temple was dedicated?—And was this extended and continued?—PERSONAL RELIGION—Samuel—David, his early Piety, Conduct in Persecution and Danger—Falls into Sin, his Penitence and Pardon—Reality of his spiritual Restoration—His Piety specially honored by the Inspiration of the Psalms—Solomon, his youthful Godliness, Views of the Messiah, Wisdom and Zeal—The Book of Ecclesiastes—Falls into Sin, establishes Idolatry—No Evidence of his Repentance—DOCTRINAL OPINIONS—Nature and Extent of the Efficacy of Sacrifice—Expiatory, vicarious, and propitiatory—Views of God—Immortality of the Soul—Separate Existence and Influence of Satan.

THE Hebrew religion, as a grand system of theology, morals, worship, and ecclesiastical polity, was planned and perfected in the wilderness. It has been already shown, that it included as its basis important theological doctrines, laws, rites, and usages; which, having been revealed or acquired in the early ages, had formed the foundation of the practical piety of the patriarchs, and were esteemed as an undoubted summary of religious faith and practice. In addition to these elements of primitive religion, the faith of the Israelites contained the revelations which God had made to them through Moses. These greatly added to their scheme of doctrine, enlarged their system of laws, prescribed a more glorious mode of worship, and provided a complete ecclesiastical economy. The whole amount of the religious knowledge, obligation, privilege, and precept derived from these sources, was by the Hebrew lawgiver wrought up into a regular and complete system of faith and practice, which was intended thenceforth to form the religion of the Hebrew people. (See *Appendix*, note 66.)

In a preceding chapter we endeavored to exhibit the great elements of this religious system: it is our present object to inquire into the application of it to the mind and character of the Hebrews, individually and collectively; to show the measure of faith with which its doctrines were received, the extent to which its laws were obeyed, and its privileges enjoyed; and thus to learn the qualities and character of this religion in the condition and circumstances of the people.

Although many and serious difficulties stand in the way of a satisfactory investigation of this interesting subject, it must be admitted that in one respect it possesses a very great advantage: the religious system of the Hebrews stood intimately associated with the people. In their diet and dress, their family relationship and property, their social life and political institutions, in fact, throughout the whole of their private and public life, their religion was everywhere prominent. It spread its requirements over their words and works, affected their trade and their property, was the bond of their civil association, and the spirit of their national existence. Men who speak of the minute requirements of the Levitical law, and its temporal sanctions, as derogatory to the character of this religion, forget that while recognizing "a heavenly country" as the basis of its hope, its prominent object was to associate man, in all his character and conduct, with the will of God, to keep him in uniform contact with divine law and religious privilege. The Hebrew religion was intended to make the nation a church, a kingdom of priests; in which every individual, knowing the divine will, and obediently conforming his mind to it, might rejoice in happy intercourse with the God of Israel. This fact, by identifying the state of religion with the condition of the people, affords opportunities for investigating the measure and character of its influence, which would not otherwise be attainable.

It seems also important to observe, that the Hebrews, when they took possession of the land of Canaan, and were called to conform to the requirements of this religion, and to obey its laws, had not to study the history or antiquities of their race, in order to obtain an assurance of its divine origin and certain obligation. No effort of reason, or labored induction, was necessary to convince them of the authority of their sacred books: these, as well as the sum of their teaching, came to them divinely authenticated. They had seen and heard in the wilderness, and even at the camp at Gilgal, unquestionable demonstrations of the divinity of their faith. The terrible displays of Divine Majesty which accompanied the enunciation of the law, had been followed by equally astonishing confirmations of it.

The mighty power of God, which made a pathway for his people through the Red Sea, was equally discernible in their passage over the Jordan. There is, indeed, scarcely any part of God's dealings with the elect people, more replete with proofs of his infinite wisdom, than the studied manner in which marvelous attestations to the truth of this religion were spread over the whole period, from the exodus to their location in Canaan. The effects produced by the thunders of Sinai were fully sustained by the wonders wrought in the wilderness. It is difficult to conceive of anything more calculated to assure the Israelites of the divinity of their covenant relation to God, than the fact of their obtaining possession of the promised land, and the manner in which this was effected. The fact itself, as a fulfillment of a great scheme of prophecy, was one of the most wonderful events which, up to that time, had transpired in the world. Let it be considered how many hundreds of years it had been predicted, what an infinite range of contingencies stood connected with its accomplishment; and yet, notwithstanding the intervention of many apparent impossibilities, at the appointed time it came to pass. This fact combined together, in a very remarkable manner, the two great seals of Divine attestation, miracle and prophecy, and must therefore have afforded decisive evidence of the verity of those religious revelations with which all these grand operations were connected. (See *Appendix*, note 67.)

Nor is the manner in which possession of the land was obtained less wonderful. It will not be necessary to enlarge on the stupendous miracles which meet us here. A rapid river is suddenly arrested in its course, and its restless waters, unable to overcome the almighty obstruction, in defiance of all physical law, rise up, and rush backward. At the word of a man, the whole mechanism of heaven is affected, the sun is arrested in his course, and the day miraculously prolonged. At the sound of rams' horns, the walls of a fortified city fall down. These are marvelous displays of Divine power; but they are not unmeaning wonders; they are special and intelligible interpositions on behalf of Israel. They are therefore so many demonstrations of the sterling verity of the Hebrew faith. The case of Achan was remarkably significant in this respect. While the people of Israel are faithful and obedient, earth and heaven combine to aid them; but when one individual sets the law of God at defiance, and takes of the "accursed thing," then the mighty men of Israel become weak as water, and cannot stand before enemies whose strength they had previously despised.

The Hebrews not only possessed this divinely revealed and divinely authenticated religion; they had been brought up under its

influence, and fully trained to its observance. As all the Israelites who entered Canaan, except Caleb and Joshua, had been born in the wilderness, so they had from their childhood grown up surrounded by evidences of the divinity of their religion. Throughout all their life they had been supported by manna; the cloudy pillar resting over the tabernacle had been daily before their eyes. Isolated from all the world beside, the Hebrew camp in the wilderness was an institution upon a grand scale for training the Hebrew nation in the knowledge and practice of their holy religion. Here God himself was their instructor; He, of set purpose, placed them in those circumstances; He dictated all their political and social economy, and miraculously provided for all their wants; He gave them laws, doctrines, and worship, and not only abode with them as their King, but also acted as their Teacher. His Spirit led them, and rejoiced over their obedience; his Spirit was grieved at their unbelief. To supply a further means of spiritual aid, he gave the spirit of prophecy, that, through these various means, Israel might be guided into all the will of God. (See *Appendix*, note 68.)

Under the influence of these numerous means, divinely adapted to their religious improvement, the Hebrews were brought into the land which God had promised to their fathers. And here, too, the same great object is made prominent: on setting up their first encampment within the limits of Canaan Proper, they are neither directed to fortify their position, nor to make any warlike aggression on the inhabitants of the land; but, before a single battle is won, or a town subdued, the undivided attention of the people is called to important religious exercises. All the males who had not been circumcised in the wilderness are now commanded to be subjected to this rite. This measure showed how fully the Divine administration recognized the paramount importance of religion, and the impressive manner in which it was kept before the people. At this crisis in their history, when they might reasonably expect a violent attack from the surrounding nations, they are, by God's command, placed in circumstances which, for a short time at least, disqualify many, if not most, of their fighting men even for self-defense. And for what object is this apparent risk incurred? That their covenant relation to God may be perfected; that they may be fully entitled to all the privileges and promises of the children of Abraham. Again: it is not an unimportant feature in these arrangements, which were all divinely regulated, that these events were so ordered as to make the time for holding the passover fall as soon after the transaction last mentioned, as the people were able to celebrate that most important festival: and, consequently, they had no sooner received the seal of the covenant, than they were

called to commemorate their redemption from Egyptian bondage.

The rapid succession of these events, considering that the time of keeping the passover was fixed, proves the existence of an over-ruling Providence in all their affairs. On the tenth day of the first month the host of Israel crossed the Jordan. The next day the rite of circumcision was administered. On the fourteenth day the passover was kept; and on the fifteenth the manna disappeared, and the people were afterwards fed with the ordinary productions of the soil.

The observance of these solemn services, immediately followed by the cessation of the miraculous supply of food, was calculated to produce a deep religious impression on the public mind. Circumcision, the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, was renewed and made general, with the greatest effect, at the moment when the hosts of Israel had obtained a location in that land which God had promised to give them, as a principal part of the temporal blessings of that covenant; while the passover, the pledge and type of their temporal and religious redemption, was also most appropriately renewed at this time; for its observance would not only be regarded as a prominent element in their religious institutions, but especially as the basis of their entire civil and ecclesiastical economy. From hence, undoubtedly, they began their computation of time, which regulated their sabbatical years, and years of jubilee. (See *Appendix*, note 69.) The whole of their divinely appointed religious polity was now brought into operation.

Nor did God fail to vindicate his claim to supreme power, and to display his omniscience, in his subsequent government of his people. The miraculous fall of Jericho proved the proper Divinity of the God of Israel, and stamped with unquestionable validity their covenant relation to Him. But the defeat of Israel before Ai, while it also contributed to this end, did more: it showed the sincerity of heart and integrity of conduct which their religion required, and the infinite knowledge and inflexible justice by which it was administered and enforced. The crime, conviction, and punishment of Achan exhibited to the Israelites of this time, in a strong light, the true character of the religion which God called them to experience and practice.

After Ai had been subdued, another important religious assembly was convened in the neighborhood of Shechem. This had been predictively appointed by Moses. Deut. xxvii, 4-26. As an event in the history of the Israelites, it has been already noticed; but it must have had an influential religious effect. It was, in fact, a public recognition of Divine authority, a national avowal of fealty and alle-

giance to God, and, above all, a clear and distinct act of worship, by which the subjection of the whole people to the Divine law, and their engagement to be faithful to the *covenant*, were clearly set forth.

All these circumstances were calculated, as they were designed, to impress religious truth upon the Israelitish people. All that they had heard from their fathers, all that Moses had communicated, was thus brought afresh to their mind and memory, and enforced on their individual judgment and conscience.

Nor were these influences ineffectual: they sustained the descendants of Jacob in a long and arduous war, and crowned their efforts with success: and when, after they had subdued the land, it was known that those tribes which had obtained a possession on the east of Jordan had built an altar there, the congregation, regarding this as an infraction of the Divine purpose, prepared to make war on their brethren, rather than tolerate a violation of the law. This whole case clearly proves, that the entire congregation was deeply imbued with the great principles of the Mosaic economy, and that, when the land was divided, the several tribes took possession of their various portions under a full persuasion of the Divine origin, truth, and obligation of their holy religion. This fidelity continued for some time; for "the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel." Judges ii, 7. But when these men had passed away from the earth, their children fearfully departed from God.

This religious defection was evinced in various ways and degrees, as circumstances or temptation acted upon the minds of the people.

The first evil which merits notice may perhaps be regarded as a corruption of worship, rather than as an open departure from the laws of Moses. It is found in the case of Micah, the man of Mount Ephraim, whose conduct is recorded in connection with the expedition of the Danites. Judges xvii, xviii. The narrative of these events was given at length in a previous chapter: we have here to ascertain their religious character. It will be necessary to recall attention to the fact, that, in this case, the silver had been dedicated to Jehovah; that Micah was greatly rejoiced when he found a Levite to be his priest; and, further, that his hopes and confidence were, in these preparations, placed in the true God; for he said, "Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest." Judges xvii, 13. All this clearly proves that he did not intend to depart from the worship of the true God. But what is to be thought of his "graven image," and "molten image," his "ephod, and teraphim?" There cannot be the slightest doubt that the intention of

these arrangements was, to prepare for the use of this family a place of worship according to the rites of the Mosaic law. For this purpose the ark and the cherubim were imitated, and suitable vestments made for the priest. The whole scope of the narrative supports this interpretation. When the five men of the tribe of Gad, who were sent to seek a better inheritance, lodged in the house of Micah, they requested this Levite to "ask counsel of God" (אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים) for them; he gave them as the result this answer: "Go in peace: before the Lord (יְהוָה) is your way wherein ye go." Judges xviii, 5, 6. The language used here also shows, that the reference was only to the true God. *Elohim* would not have been the word used by the Danites if it had not been so, and the priest would not have predicted their success by a reference to *Jehovah*. We do not undertake to decide whether this application was truly made to God, and responded to by Him; although "it is really begging the question to assert, as many commentators have done, that the answer was either a trick of the Levite, or suggested by the devil, and that the success of the Danites was merely accidental."—*Dr. A. Clarke*. The narrative does not afford sufficient evidence to make this clear either way; but it does unquestionably prove that the true worship of *Jehovah* was intended. This is further evident from the sequel; for, when the six hundred men of the tribe of Dan went to take possession of the place which the spies had found, they took the Levite, and his images, and teraphim, and ephod, even all the sacred things which Micah had prepared at so much trouble and expense; and their argument with him was, "Is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel? And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people." Verses 19, 20.

There is not in the entire narrative, from first to last, the slightest allusion to any departure from the law and worship of *Jehovah*. If anything of this kind had been intended, as so many persons were successively engaged in this matter, it would certainly have led to some inquiry or explanation. But we have not a word of the kind; all seemed desirous to participate, all appeared fully to understand the object, and to speak and act as if worship according to the national faith had been the design; which could not have happened had the purpose been an idolatrous one. We have dwelt longer on this point than would have been otherwise necessary, because similar instances meet us in the history, to which these remarks will equally apply.

Gideon was specially called of God to be the instrument of de-

livering Israel from the tyranny of the Midianites. And it is to be noted, that the history of his call and conflicts shows us, more strikingly than is done anywhere else, that the power was of God. Nor were the peculiarities of the Divine procedure, in this instance, confined to a proof that it was not the skill or prowess of the judge, nor the number or valor of his followers, which defeated Midian: the course of Divine interposition was equally directed to enlighten and raise the mind of the selected chief, and to lead him to exercise a true and powerful faith in God.

After he had brought this war to a successful termination, his conduct, regarded in a religious aspect, presents a very extraordinary exhibition. Having required, as his share of the spoils, the earrings which the Israelites had taken from their enemies during the war, he received "a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside ornaments and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks." Judges viii, 26. And how did he appropriate this immense wealth? The sacred record says he "made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah." Verse 27. As it is certain that all this gold (amounting to above seventy pounds' weight, and being of sterling value more than £3,000) could not have been spent in purchasing or adorning an ephod; and as an ephod alone could not supply the necessary requisites for worship according to the manner of the times; "it is commonly said," observes Bishop Patrick, (in his Commentary,) "that so much gold could not be laid out upon an ephod; and therefore some take this for a short expression to signify the breastplate, with the Urim and Thummim; that he (being now supreme governor) might consult God at his own house, in such difficulties as might occur: and they think it probable that he made also a private tabernacle with cherubims: for how else could he employ such a quantity of gold? Theodoret and St. Austin seem to incline to this opinion;" which is also supported by the learned Jurieu, who, referring to another text, says, "By the ephod, must be understood the whole oracle of Urim and Thummim, inclosed within the ephod, as also the ark and the cherubims, from the midst of which the oracle was delivered."—*Hist. of the Church*, vol. ii, p. 99.

If these conjectures may be relied on, we find Gideon following the example of Micah on a larger and more costly scale. And, as Dr. Hales shrewdly suggests, Gideon "was probably induced, by the altar which the Lord required him to build at Ophrah, on the rock where he had accepted his sacrifice, to think that this might be the place which the Lord so often declared in the law, that 'he would

choose for his name.'"—*Analysis*, vol. ii, p. 283. But in this instance, as in that of Micah, and of the Danites, there appears to have been no intention of departing from the worship of Jehovah. This whole course of conduct was therefore analogous to that of Aaron, in the case of the golden calf.

But, however pure might have been the intention of the persons implicated in this conduct, its effect was most pernicious. The inspired writer says "the thing became a snare unto Gideon;" and, further, that "all Israel went thither a whoring after it:" (verse 27 :) a clear proof that it led the people into idolatry. (See *Appendix*, note 70.) To what extent this conduct prevailed, we cannot now ascertain. There were very few persons, during the government of the judges, who would be able to carry it out on so expensive a plan. It might, nevertheless, in a more private and domestic manner, have exercised a fearful influence upon the public, in preparing them for gross idolatry. (See *Appendix*, note 71.)

But if some of the Hebrew people were led to worship the work of their own hands in this slow and indirect manner, others boldly threw off the restraint of the law, and plunged at once into all the sinfulness of Heathen worship.

The first instance recorded in the Book of Judges of public and avowed idolatry is thus related: "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim. They forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth." Chap. ii, 11, 13. And the following chapter says, they "served Baalim and the groves." iii, 7.

We shall not here anticipate the subject of the third volume of this work, by attempting any exposition of the origin and character of the idol-gods to which reference is now made: it will be sufficient to show that the Israelites actually sank into this idolatry, and to point out the pernicious consequences to which they were thereby exposed.

The word *Baal* signifies "Lord," or "Master;" in Heathen mythology it is generally, or at least primarily, applied to the sun. This glorious luminary was adored in different countries under the titles, *Bel*, *Bal*, *Baal*, and in Phenicia, *Baalzamin*, "the great lord of the heavens." As the religion of the Heathen became complex by addition, subdivision, and fanciful creations, various compound deities were worshiped, such as Baal-peor, Baal-zebub, Baal-zephon, and Baal-berith. Even at this time, so great progress had been made in this evil art, that, because the sun was regarded as the source of all the prolific and productive powers of nature, the worship of Baal was incorporated not only with earthly elements, but also with impure and sensual references and rites. This was the

case with the Baal-peor of Moab. And, notwithstanding the severe chastisement inflicted upon Israel for their transgression in this respect on the east side of the Jordan, we scarcely find them in quiet possession of the land which God had given them, before they sink into the same or similar abominations.

The grand evil of this practice, and one which at the same time applies with equal force to every other species of idolatry, was, that it rejected the true God. It was open and direct rebellion against Heaven. The Israelite, therefore, who entered into this course, canceled his covenant relation to Jehovah, and, while he thus incurred the fearful guilt of this iniquity, shut himself out from all access to Infinite Wisdom and Power, directed and moved by unbounded goodness and love. The men whose fathers passed through the Red Sea, and were fed with manna from heaven; they whose immediate predecessors saw the miracles of Jordan, Jericho, and Gibeon, thus alienated themselves from their almighty Saviour, and trusted in an idol, which "is nothing."

But, in addition to this, as idolatry prevailed in the land, so every moral obligation was destroyed, and all religious rule obliterated. The true foundation of morals is the will of God. That will is holy, because he is holy. There is therefore no knowledge of true morality but in a knowledge of the Divine Will; and the knowledge that a holy life is required by the will of God, affords the highest sanction which moral purity can receive. But where God is rejected, and a knowledge of his will shut out by the willing subjection of the mind to error and evil, there no just standard of morals can exist; nor can the wildest aberrations of the mind, or the vilest rioting of the affections, meet any restraint but what is afforded by human interest: and hence it is truly said, the worshipers of idols are "filled with unrighteousness." Rom. i, 29.

Again: idolatry introduces fatal error on a subject of the greatest importance. It is false. Religion deals with the most lofty verities; concerns the best interests of man; engages the most elevated attributes of his mind, and has for its object his present and everlasting good. The introduction of idolatry removes all truth from these grand and momentous themes; and not only takes them from open vision into distance and obscurity, but sheds over all a false medium. Everything is seen in perverted proportion, and in unjust relation to every other. Thus religion, in its height and depth, in its wide, its infinite range of interest and importance, is made "a lie."

All this was consequent upon the apostasy of Israel. It must indeed be remembered, that this course was not taken by the whole

nation as a public act; it arose out of individual and family transgression. But then, as these offenses multiplied and extended their influence over society, so the evils to which we have referred became prevalent.

But the worship of Baal introduced disorders and evils of a peculiar kind, although not fully developed at the time of the introduction of this worship into Israel: still, there is every reason to believe that, even then, very obscene rites were associated with this idolatry. This is rendered more probable by the connection of Baal with Ashtaroth. All who are acquainted with oriental mythology are aware that the divinities are generally brought before us in pairs. This arose out of the fact already adverted to, that whatever might be the originating cause of any idolatry, in its progress and development it generally embraced and symbolized the prolific powers of nature.

Ashtaroth was the moon, and was therefore adored in conjunction with Baal the sun. (See Jurieu's Crit. Hist., vol ii, p. 139.) This worship was very frequently conducted in sacred groves, raised for the express purpose. Hence in the same connection it is said, They "served Baalim and the groves." Judges iii, 7. These were dedicated to Ashtaroth, and were generally close to the temple of Baal; and when cattle were offered in sacrifice to this idol, they brought cakes and drink-offerings and incense to the goddess. In these sacred shades the most shameful vices were practiced in connection with their idolatrous rites; and these are what are so often referred to and condemned by Holy Scripture as serving "their gods under every green tree." The worshipers of this goddess caused themselves to be marked or tattooed on the skin with the figure of a tree. It was also the custom to place tables on the roofs of the houses, in the vestibules, at the doors, and at the crossways, on which, every new moon, they spread a feast in honor of Ashtaroth.

The fearful consequences of this awful defection were soon apparent. Having rejected God, and thrown off those restraints and obligations by which they stood connected with him as his peculiar people, they saw no reason for isolating themselves from the surrounding Canaanitish tribes: they therefore "took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods." Judges iii, 6. Thus, as far as the disobedience of a great and increasing proportion of the people could do it, the covenant mercy and gracious promises of Jehovah were made of none effect. But God in compassion visited them with punishment. As they would not maintain their peculiarity of character by living according to their privilege, God separated them from the surrounding

Heathen by subjecting them to great suffering. For this affliction, while it fell on them as a just punishment for their sin, at the same time clearly distinguished the Israelites from the surrounding Canaanitish tribes. We never hear of any of these sharing in the calamities of Israel; on the contrary, there appears every reason to believe that, during these seasons of Hebrew subjection, they greatly recovered their strength. These successive inflictions therefore did what Israelitish piety ought to have done,—they clearly distinguished them from all other people.

Having noticed these successive servitudes and deliverances in the last chapter, it will here be only necessary to refer to any peculiarity of a religious character presented to our notice in the narrative.

The first which calls for passing attention is the thanksgiving ode of Deborah, which breathes the most lofty ideas of Jehovah, and shows his covenant relation and mercy to Israel, at the same time identifying the conflict to which it refers with the purposes of Heaven, and ascribing the victory which it celebrates to the Lord Jehovah.

It is worthy of observation that, in the ensuing servitude, when Gideon threw down the altar of Baal, the men of the city gathered about the house, and said to his father, "Bring out thy son, that he may die." Judges vi, 30. So devoted were the inhabitants of Ophrah to this infamous idolatry! The manly exhortation of Joash, also, deserves notice: he challenged the divinity, threw back the defense of the rites upon the supposed deity, and, referring to the explicit institutes of the Mosaic law, urged that he who dared to plead for Baal was worthy of death. This devotedness to idolatry by the inhabitants of this neighborhood accounts, in some measure, for the fearful relapse which appears to have taken place immediately after the death of Gideon: for, not only did the ephod and other imitations of sacred things become a snare to Gideon and his house, but, as soon as he was dead, the people sank into their former idolatry, and added to the number of their former idols, Baal-berith, who was worshiped by the Shechemites, (Judges ix, 4, 46,) and had a temple there. From the name, it has been inferred that this deity presided over alliances or covenants. Such appropriations were common among the Heathen; but it is startling to behold the sons of Israel polluting themselves with such profane mockery, while they forsook and provoked the only covenant-keeping God.

Nor did the successive afflictive visitations to which they were subjected effect any permanent improvement. On the contrary, idolatry seems not only to have obtained a wider and deeper influence over the minds of the people, but, harassed and spirit-broken

by almost continual bondage, they were individually and socially disqualified from making any important efforts in the way of religious improvement. We consequently find them, in the days of Eli, deeply sunk in irreligion and vice. It cannot, indeed, be denied that, even then, the worship of Jehovah was regularly maintained at Shiloh; and that worshipers were still found who approached the holy place with devotedness of heart and true sincerity of mind, as the case of Hannah proves. It must, however, at the same time be admitted, that, for all truly practical purposes, the administration of religion was poisoned at the fountain. The priesthood had become ungodly and unjust. Not only did their covetous rapacity insult and oppress the worshipers, and make the service of Jehovah an abomination in their eyes; their flagrant vices polluted the access to the tabernacle, and stained its holy service with the filthiest adjuncts of the vilest Heathenism.

It will be necessary here to notice the case of the daughter of Jephthah, as standing connected with the period which has now passed under review. If we take the Scriptural narrative of this case, as it stands in our authorized version, although the story is a very melancholy one, it presents no remarkable difficulty. It states that, when this chief was marching at the head of his army to repel the Ammonites, he "vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering." Judges xi, 30, 31. When crowned with success, and returning in triumph "unto his house, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas! my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back. And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth." Verses 34-36. Subsequently she requested a respite for two months, that she, with her fellows, might bewail her fate; and at the end of the two months, "she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow." Verse 39. It has therefore been concluded, that Jephthah slew his daughter, and offered her up for a burnt-offering. On the other hand, however, it has been contended that a conduct so abhorrent to nature could not have been found in a judge of Israel; and that

the words of the text do not absolutely require this sense ; that the terms may only mean, that she should be devoted to the Lord, and thus be doomed to perpetual virginity.

Yet, notwithstanding all that has been said in support of this view of the case, we think a full investigation of the subject would justify the terms of the authorized translation ; and persuade the reader, that the most probable interpretation of the story is that which supposes that Jephthah (having lived a great part of his life on the borders of Ammon and Moab, nations notoriously addicted to human sacrifice) did, in this great emergency, vow to immolate the first person who should come forth to meet him on his successful return ; and that, although deeply grieved at this proving to be his only child, he nevertheless fulfilled his vow, and did to her as he had said. (See *Appendix*, note 72.)

Those who have imagined that this sacrifice was offered up by the high priest, or that the maiden was sent as a devotee to the tabernacle, forget that the seat of the Jewish national worship was, at this time, at Shiloh, in the portion of Ephraim ; and that, immediately on his return, Jephthah was engaged in a bloody war with this tribe, which must have effectually prevented any intercourse with the supreme ecclesiastical authorities for either purpose. Jephthah ruled on the east of Jordan ; and there can be no doubt that, if this enormity was perpetrated, it was consummated by himself, without the knowledge or sanction of the Jewish high priest.

We have hitherto traced the declension of religion among the Israelites from the death of Joshua to the time of Eli, when the knowledge and service of Jehovah seemed reduced to its lowest point, and idolatry and vice were fearfully prevalent. From this time a brighter day began to dawn, and there was evidently a gradual revival of religion amongst the people, which, with more or less interruption, continued until the reign of Solomon.

In our endeavors to exhibit a correct view of the religion of this period, it will not be unsuitable, in the first place, to point out the several most important agencies by which this great improvement was effected. Here, as in every other instance, we distinctly recognize primarily the gracious influence of the Spirit of God. The whole Jewish religion was the result of Divine interposition. By this it was originated and sustained. If, at that time, the people had been left to themselves, they would soon have merged into the common mass of idolatrous tribes by which they were surrounded, and the Mosaic economy would have perished from the knowledge of man. This was prevented, not only by the watchful care and gracious influence of Jehovah on individual mind, but by the raising

up of suitable instruments, who, guided by divine illumination, not only checked the progress of idolatry, and gave an impulse to true religion, by the force of their own personal character, but also adopted public measures, and promoted institutions, which were productive of the most happy results.

The first of these means which meets us in the history of this period, is the call of Samuel to the important offices of prophet and judge. It is worthy of remark, that this man, whose character, even at first, shone as a light in a dark place, was the child of pious parents,—one given in answer to earnest prayer. How often has this been the case in all ages of the church! From the time when the gift of prophecy was communicated to the seventy in the wilderness to the vocation of Samuel, we hear but little of the exercise of this agency. Joshua certainly spoke under plenary inspiration, and stood in the character of a prophet. Deborah was also called a prophetess, and received communications immediately from heaven, and thus, under direct divine influence, acted in a public capacity, and “judged Israel.” It is equally certain that Hannah spake under the influence of the Holy Ghost, when she poured out her heart to God in a song of thanksgiving. With the exception of Joshua, however, the communication of this gift does not appear to have been productive of very important public benefit, in a religious sense. But, in the general declension which continued to the time of Eli, it appears to have been almost, if not altogether, withdrawn. “The word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.” 1 Sam. iii, 1.

In the person of Samuel it pleased Jehovah again to visit Israel with plenary inspiration. When but a child he was informed of the impending ruin of the house of Eli: “And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord.” Verses 19, 20. The general knowledge of this fact must have had a beneficial influence upon the public mind. It asserted the supremacy of Jehovah; and, while it thus raised a barrier against the floods of idolatry, it gave encouragement and confidence to those who still retained their faith and devotedness to God.

These important results were further promoted by the introduction and maintenance of an efficient, wise, and just administration. Samuel, in his official capacity as judge, not only decided all cases submitted to his decision at his own house at Ramah, but “he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.” 1 Sam. vii, 16.

These efforts of the prophet were followed with special Divine influence ; for we are told, that the whole "house of Israel lamented after the Lord." Verse 2. This, be it observed, was not such a profession of obedience as had often been made before, under the pressure of severe national suffering or danger. They were now in comparative peace, yet were their hearts turned to seek the Lord. Samuel readily responds to their desire, and urges them to renounce all idolatry, to put away their strange gods. His language on this occasion shows, not only that he apprehended the spirit of religion, but that it made a part of his teaching, and was to some extent understood by the people : "Put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only." Verse 3. And the sacred record assures us of their obedience ; they "did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only." Verse 4. "Baalim and Ashtaroth," in this text, must be regarded as generic terms, the one referring to male, and the other to female divinities : the words here, therefore, include all the objects of idolatrous worship ; and, consequently, the passage appropriately declares that they served "the Lord only."

This religious reformation was so general, that Samuel thought himself justified in convening a national assembly. He therefore invited the people to meet him at Mizpeh, saying, "I will pray for you unto the Lord." Verse 5. They assembled, "and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted." Verse 6. What the precise object of this ceremony might be, we are not informed. Commentators differ in opinion respecting it. The Chaldee paraphrast understood the terms figuratively ; for he translates the passage, "And they poured out their hearts in penitence as waters before the Lord." This is probably the true meaning, and shows the depth of feeling with which the people humbled themselves before God on account of their continued transgressions.

This religious reformation was, however, not only promoted by the weight of Samuel's pious character, and the effect of his personal ministrations ; he either called into existence, or greatly revived and extended, the schools of the prophets. This proceeding appears to have produced a very great effect upon the religious condition of the people. (See *Appendix*, note 73.)

Under these influences the Israelites progressed, during the rule of Samuel, in the knowledge of revealed truth, and in the practice of its requirements. We shall refer to the character of David when speaking of personal religion ; and therefore only observe here, that his youthful piety, and the sterling religious principles which he ex-

hibited throughout the early part of his reign, must have greatly promoted the improvement previously in operation.

It will be necessary now to ascertain the condition and observance of religious worship, during this period, the seat and centre of which was the Mosaic tabernacle. Here all the stated ceremonial of the law was performed; and Moses predicted that God himself would "choose a place" for this purpose. Deut. xii, 11. Consequently, although, when the tribes first passed the Jordan, the tabernacle was set up at Gilgal; when the land was entirely subdued and occupied, it was removed to Shiloh. Joshua xviii, 1. This appears to have been done by the express command of Jehovah; for he speaks of it as his own act. Jer. vii, 12. We are not informed of the reason of this selection, although it is not improbable that it was done because Ephraim had succeeded by adoption to the birthright instead of Reuben, Gen. xlviii, 5, 17-20; 1 Chron. v, 1, 2; Shiloh being in the portion of territory allotted to Ephraim.

The tabernacle remained at Shiloh during the entire government of the judges; and, although every part of the country had been invaded, and brought into subjection to the Heathen, the sacred tent was preserved as the seat of worship until the time of Eli. But little is known of the attention bestowed by the people of that time on the solemn services of the sanctuary. There is in the history but one instance of any special inquiry having been made of God here for the space of four hundred years, and that was during the early part of this period; for it was in the life-time of Phinehas. Judges xx, 27, 28. There can be little question that the Mosaic ceremonial was continually performed in the tabernacle at Shiloh; for this was done in the days of Eli, notwithstanding the enormous vices which had been introduced in immediate connection with the most solemn observances.

The continued and increasing iniquity of his people led Jehovah to take from them the glory of the sanctuary. In a case of great emergency, the ark was brought from the tabernacle, and carried before the army, which was raised to repel an irruption of the Philistines. As we have already seen, it was taken by the Heathen, and kept by them seven months; but, what is specially remarkable, when returned, it was not brought to its place in the tabernacle. On every principle of religion and politics, we should have thought that this would have been the first object of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Not only, however, was the ark not immediately returned to the tabernacle,—*it never was*. We are not aware that this singular fact can be accounted for but by referring it to Divine interposition. The ark was brought first to Beth-shemesh, where the men were

smitten by God for their profane curiosity, 1 Sam. vi, 18, 19; it was then taken to Kirjath-jearim, "into the house of Abinadab in the hill," who sanctified his son Eleazar to keep it. 1 Sam. vii, 1. Here it remained a long time. Verse 2.

During this period the tabernacle had been removed from Shiloh to Gibeon, in the tribe of Benjamin; for here it was when David carried the ark to Jerusalem. 1 Chron. xvi, 39. We have very slender information respecting these removals of the tabernacle, except that we are told they were from the Lord; for he rejected Shiloh, (Psalm lxxviii, 60,) because he rejected Ephraim. Verse 67.

After David was established in the kingdom, he purposed removing the ark from the house of Abinadab. It does not appear that he had any intention of restoring it to the tabernacle: his wish seems to have been to bring it to his own house. But on this occasion, either from ignorance or inattention, they did not carry the ark, as commanded in the law, on the shoulders of the Kohathites, but put it into a new cart; when, being shaken by the motion of the vehicle, Uzzah put forth his hand, and took hold of the ark, for which temerity he was smitten with instant death. David, grieved and alarmed that a design which he contemplated with so much joy should be defeated by this terrible infliction, shrank from the hazard of completing his purpose, and commanded the ark to be taken into the house of Obed-edom, where it remained three months.

But David, having heard that the Lord had greatly blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertained to him, since the time that the ark had been in his house, prepared a tabernacle for it near his own residence on Mount Zion, and went down and brought it up thither with great joy. On this occasion the requirements of the law were fully complied with. 1 Chron. xv, 2-15. This object being accomplished, David made an arrangement of priests and Levites to meet the new state of things. There were at that time two persons acting as high priests, Zadok and Abiathar.* 2 Sam. xx, 25. Of these Zadok, with his brethren the priests, were appointed to attend the ministry of the sanctuary, to offer the daily and other stated sacrifices, agreeably to the Mosaic law, "and to do according to all that is written in the law of the Lord, which he commanded Israel," 1 Chron. xvi, 40; while Asaph and his brethren were appointed "to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required." Verse 37. Now, it is worthy of notice, that Asaph was not a priest, but a Levite. And it appears, from 1 Chron. vi, 31-48, that Levites alone were appointed to the service of this tabernacle; while in verse

* He (David) also appointed Zadok, of the family of Phinehas, to be high priest, together with Abiathar; for he was his friend. *Josephus's Antiq.*, book vii, chap. 5, sect. 4.

49 it is said, "But Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and on the altar of incense, and were appointed for all the work of the place most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded." But Asaph and his company ministered before the Lord in the tabernacle with a service of singing, verse 31, "to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel." Chap. xvi, 4. Sacrifices, which are manifestly to be regarded as extraordinary, from the occasion, were offered by David when the ark was brought up to this tabernacle; but after it was placed here, and "had rest," we hear of no legal sacrifices being offered in connection with this sanctuary; all the ceremonial of the law being performed at Gibeon.

This case is altogether most extraordinary. No erection was ever raised upon earth more fully Divine in its plan and purpose than the tabernacle of Moses; all its parts and every portion of its furniture were designed after a heavenly "pattern," and all intimately adapted to the worship which was there commanded to be performed. Yet we find this order broken, this plan deranged, and the entire harmony of the sacred service destroyed by the circumstances to which we have referred. Why was this? All will admit that the ark of the covenant and its appendages were the essential centre of worship, and the glory of the Mosaic tabernacle. Yet these are taken away, isolated from the sacrificial service, and made the seat of a simple worship, which appears to have consisted mainly in prayer and praise to God.

Whatever difficulty may be connected with the subject, it is certain that this innovation was not made by David for the purpose of contravening the Divine law. In proof of this, we may refer to one very significant fact. In the law, it was specially required that the signal for gathering the people together for any religious purpose was to be the sound of trumpets, which were to be blown by two priests. Num. x, 2, 3, 7, 8. Now, as it was necessary that some signal should be given to call the people to the services of the tabernacle of David, this law, which had been enjoined "as an ordinance forever," was complied with; and Benaiah and Jehaziel, the priests, were appointed to serve continually with trumpets before the ark of the covenant of God. 1 Chron. xvi, 6. The fact that David was divinely inspired, connected with the well-known watchful protection which God at that time exercised over everything pertaining to his worship, would in itself be sufficient to show, at least, that the alteration was divinely sanctioned. But this sanction seems to be directly asserted by Holy Scripture. We are not only informed that Jehovah refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of

Ephraim, but that he "chose the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion which he loved." Psalm lxxviii, 67, 68. But in immediate connection with this reference to the abandonment of Shiloh, and selection of Zion, as the site for the residence of the ark, it is said, as if to give a formal justification of these arrangements of the king, "He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheep-folds, to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance." Verses 70, 71. This was the Divine appointment; and that David in this respect executed the purpose of God, is certain; for it is added, "So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands." Verse 72.

Thus everything continued during the whole reign of David. Once we find him offering sacrifice on the threshing-floor of Araunah; but this is specially justified by the emergency of the occasion. 1 Chron. xxi, 28-30. When Solomon succeeded to the throne, he first proceeded to Gibeon, where he sacrificed, (2 Chron. i, 3, 5; 1 Kings iii, 4,) and then returned to Jerusalem, (2 Chron. i, 13,) where he offered again before the ark. 1 Kings iii, 15.

It would greatly aid us in the investigation of this subject, if more ample information had been given respecting this tabernacle and its worship. We do not know even whether it was divided by a veil, after the manner of the Mosaic sanctuary, or was only one apartment. From the language employed to describe the placing of the ark there, we should incline to the latter opinion. "So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the *midst* of the tent that David had pitched for it." 1 Chron. xvi, 1. It is well known that in the Mosaic sanctuary the ark was at the extreme end of the inner compartment; while here it is said to be in the *midst** of the tabernacle. (See *Appendix*, note 74.)

But, however this may be, we may form some idea of the nature of the worship which was offered here, from the declared purpose of David, and the Psalm which he delivered on the first celebration of worship there. The king, it is said, "appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel." 1 Chron. xvi, 4. A clear and consistent exposition of this text would cast light upon the subject; but the task is replete with difficulty. It appears probable, that here the term "minister" is applied to the general character of the persons so employed, as engaged in carrying out all the reli-

* We are aware that מִן, which is here rendered "midst," is sometimes translated "within;" but then the former is the true sense of the term; and, although used in the Old Testament above four hundred times, it is rendered "within" but about twenty, and some of these are corrected in the marginal readings by "midst."

gious services of this holy place, two prominent parts of which are immediately specified; "to record," and to "thank and praise the Lord God of Israel." Or it may be that the correct reading is that which is countenanced by the Septuagint: "To minister, lifting up the voice, and to give thanks and praise." In either case the term זָכַר here rendered "record," must be taken as giving the precise designation to the first branch of this duty. The generic sense of this word is "to remember," or "to put in remembrance;" and, consequently, there can be little doubt that one primary part of this service consisted in reciting the manifold and gracious interpositions of God on behalf of Israel, and the covenant promises which he had made unto them. The great things which Jehovah had done, and which he had promised further to do, were thus brought to the remembrance of the people, and made the basis of exhortations, and injunctions to obedience and piety. (See Patrick *in loco*.) The second part consisted in singing the praises of God in such sacred hymns as were from time to time composed by David or other holy men.

That this opinion is correct, is sufficiently evident from the tenor of the psalm which was composed on the occasion, and which was then first sung.* 1 Chron. xvi, 7. After a spirited poetic exordium, calling for united thanksgiving, the Psalmist proceeds: "Remember his marvelous works that he hath done;" and thence goes on to give a rapid summary of God's gracious interpositions on behalf of Israel. He then briefly denounces the vanity of idols, and proceeds to enjoin fervent gratitude to God, and the exercise of deep and hallowed devotion. The lip of man scarcely ever gave utterance to a sentiment more rich in true sublimity, more profound in theologic purity, or more important in moral injunction, than the clause, "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." All nature is then invoked to join in a general chorus of thanksgiving; the whole closing with prayer and praise. This sublime Psalm is full of purity and power; and, if it may be taken as exhibiting the spirit and manner of this tabernacle-worship, it must be regarded as deeply impressive and highly spiritual.

It is, however, by no means certain, that the addresses delivered in this sanctuary were entirely confined to the Levites: what are we to understand by the following language of David? "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy

* It does not appear improbable that this psalm was continued as a part of the daily service.—Patrick.

salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation." Psalm xl, 9, 10.

We are convinced that a careful and extended investigation of this subject would place before the church and the world a view of the religious position and privileges of God's ancient Israel, which has been seldom, if ever, realized. Our limits forbid this: we must, therefore, pass from this point, observing, that the institution of this simple and spiritual worship, in the sanctuary before the mercy-seat, where holy men recounted the Divine goodness, both in national and personal instances, (Psalm xxxii,) and where the Psalms of David and Asaph were daily sung, must have had a wonderful effect in enlightening the mind, and exhibiting God's spiritual purposes to his devout people. We have one striking instance of this in Psalm lxxiii. Here is the case of a pious man, harassed and perplexed by the apparently unequal operation of Divine Providence, until his faith sunk under the painful exercise, and he says, "My feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped." Verse 2. And by what means is his mind enlightened? How are his peace and confidence restored? Not by any labored philosophic investigation; not by recourse to the provisions of the law, or the written promises of the covenant: copies of existing revealed truth were not then, perhaps, in private hands. No; this knowledge and comfort were found in religious worship. The painful embarrassment continued, "until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." Verse 17. Here spiritual light beams upon the mind. He realizes the "destruction" which awaited the wicked, and the joyous destiny of the righteous; and, happily released from his trouble by this enlightenment, takes God for his portion; and, content with his earthly lot, exclaims, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Verses 24, 25.

Learned men may speculate as they please upon the amount of religious knowledge possessed by the Israelites at this period. The fact is, that it was not revealed in a doctrinal form, but apprehended in the spiritual exercises and experience of pious men. As Abraham saw the day of Christ, so the pious Jew, entering into the spirit of the divine purpose, saw and rejoiced in the possession of substantial religious blessing. And this, we have every reason to believe, was greatly promoted by the worship established in the tabernacle of David.

This state of things continued until the third year of the reign of Solomon; and it is very probable that the young prince was trained

up in constant attendance upon the ordinances of this sanctuary. But, the temple having been finished, both these tabernacles were superseded, and the splendid edifice consecrated to the service of Jehovah. This was done in great pomp and magnificence. The furniture of the Mosaic tabernacle was not used in the temple for its former purpose, Solomon having made new articles of a more gorgeous and costly character in its stead. The ark of the covenant was the only exception. This was taken from David's tabernacle, and carried by Levites to the door of the temple, when the priests took it up, and placed it in its proper position in the most holy place. It may be observed here, that the cherubim made by order of Moses stood on each end of the ark, and were, in fact, a part of the lid; but those erected by Solomon were much larger, and stood upon the floor, stretching their wings out on each side, so that the two wings toward the middle of the house touched each other; and the ark with its cherubim was placed between these larger ones, and under their wings. But the tabernacle of the congregation, with all its sacred furniture, that it might neither be profaned nor idolized, was brought to the temple, and deposited, in all probability, in the sacred treasury.

We are told that, after the priests had put the ark in its place, "it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God." 2 Chron. v, 11-14. Was this a new display of the visible Divine glory? or had the shekinah remained over the ark of the covenant, and was this a more effulgent breaking forth of its brightness? Whether there was always a visible display of this glory over the ark, we may reasonably doubt: we hear nothing of its appearance during the period of the Philistinian captivity. Yet we can scarcely question its manifestation in the tabernacle of David. But for this, the Psalmist would scarcely have spoken of the ark as identical with the Divine Presence, as he clearly does: "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Psalm xlii, 2. Hence it is said, "He sitteth between the cherubims." Psalm xcix, 1. But, what is still more decisive, is the important fact, that pious worshipers at this time identified the attainment of religious blessing with the shining forth of this mysterious light. What else are we to understand by this language?—"Thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." Psalm lxxx, i. And be it observed, that similar terms abound in the devotional poetry of this period: the same expressions are repeated

thrice in this psalm. Verses 3, 7, 19. In fact, in the language of David, *to obtain blessing*, and for *God*, or *the face of God*, *to shine forth*, are clearly synonymous expressions.

But this pervading cloud and overpowering glory did not constitute the greatest manifestation of himself which Jehovah was pleased to make on this occasion. These clearly indicated that God had taken possession of the house which had been built for the honor of his name. But when Solomon, having briefly addressed the people, spread forth his hands, and poured out his ever-memorable prayer to God, "fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house." 2 Chron. vii, 1. This is the highest token of acceptance which God was pleased to bestow: the fullest proof was thus given to the assembled hosts of Israel of the Divine Presence and blessing. We need not, therefore, wonder that "they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshiped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." Verse 3. Israel had on many former occasions received splendid manifestations of the divine favor and interposition; but most of those had been communicated in seasons of extreme affliction or danger. Now, however, in a time of prosperity and peace, a great national act of devotedness is honored with this striking mark of the divine acceptance.

The entire procedure on this occasion was greatly calculated to strengthen the faith and foster the piety of the Israelites of that day. They could not but see in these circumstances a renewal of their covenant relation to God, a proof of his gracious acceptance and blessing, and a pledge of his future guidance and protection.

These religious services having been completed, in the manner fully detailed in Holy Scripture, it becomes now our duty to inquire whether, from this time forward, the worship of the Israelites was confined to the ritual service of the temple, or whether the people had any opportunities of instruction and worship similar to that which they enjoyed in the tabernacle of David. If this was not the case, although, by the erection of the temple, and this public recognition of it by God, as the dwelling-place of his glory, a stronger bulwark was raised against national defection into idolatry, there would have been, at the same time, a loss of those means which had done so much to promote spiritual religion in the time of David. And, as this was, after all, the great conserving principle of Jewish weal, it is difficult to conceive that it should be placed in jeopardy by these divinely appointed arrangements.

Our brief inquiry into this question will moot one of the most abstruse and disputed points in the religious archæology of the Hebrews; namely, the origin of synagogues. If these were raised in different localities at this time, for the purposes of mutual edification and worship, it will be admitted that the want created by the removal of the ark would be fully met. And it will be observed that we are not told that the tabernacle of David was taken down or removed. The ark was carried to the temple, and the tabernacle of the congregation (the Mosaic one) was entirely removed; but, for anything which appears on the sacred record, the religious assemblies which had hitherto been held here might have been continued. Nor does this supposition appear to be at all improbable. But then, as this place, the ark being removed, would possess no advantage over any other, those pious persons residing in other localities might naturally erect similar places, until such houses for religious worship became numerous. It may not be possible to support these conjectures by such evidence as will place the existence of synagogues, or something similar to them, at this time, beyond the reach of doubt; yet it must, we think, be admitted, that all the prominent peculiarities of the religious history of the Hebrews at this period unite to render their existence exceedingly probable. (See *Appendix*, note 75.)

On this subject a learned writer pertinently remarks: "The temple-worship, as it was constituted in the days of David and Solomon, was grand, august, and imposing. Yet can we easily understand how a felt necessity would arise for a more intimate and closer, if it must be also majestic, intercourse with God, by the intermediation of certain solemnities in which all and each of a congregation would have an individual share. Nor would this feeling of want wait for any other condition than an active and somewhat refined religious sense, experienced in a population of which only a small number could crowd and find room in the gates of the national temple: so that there is nothing unreasonable or imaginary in giving to the origin of synagogues an earlier date than the period of the exile."—*Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia*, art. Synagogues.

We know, from the facts which have passed under our notice, that this want was felt, that the tabernacle of David was built to afford this more general intercourse with God; and therefore, without deciding whether any such places for worship previously existed, we think it sufficiently plain that from this time they increased in number, and that this tabernacle was the model after which they were formed, and its worship the type of that which was afterward celebrated in the synagogues.

Attention will now be directed to the nature and influence of personal religion, as realized and evinced in individual character during this period. However vast, in the wide extent of their range, the purposes of redeeming mercy may be; whatever effects they may be calculated to produce on the position of states, and the destinies of empires; it is undeniably certain that the primary object of all real religion is to save individual men from sin, and to prepare them for the enjoyment of the glories of heaven. The essential nature of the religion of any people or time is therefore not only to be sought in their formularies of worship and systems of faith, but more particularly in the purity and energy of its influence upon individual mind.

On this head, reference may first be made to the holiness of heart and life inculcated and experienced under the influence of the religion of this period. It must be evident to all, that the materials do not exist which are necessary to enable us to do justice to this subject. How seldom do we find the brightest specimens of piety in camps or courts! In how few cases are those who are busily engaged in public or national affairs a fair sample of the practical virtue of any people! Yet in this case the record only refers in detail to very public and prominent persons. The multitude of thoughtful, serious, spiritually-minded people, who, from the time of the judges to the death of Solomon, walked in simplicity and sincerity before God, realizing the blessings of his covenant mercy, and adorning their quiet and private course with the graces of holiness, do not meet our eye. Their memorial does not remain on earth; their record is on high. Yet they did exist: and although we cannot cite their individual character to illustrate the nature and influence of religion in this age, we know by the evidence of fact that this piety must have existed. It is utterly impossible that Samuel could have carried out his reforms, that David could have had companions in his devotion, that such amazing wealth could have been cast into the treasury of the Lord for the erection of the temple, if private piety had not existed. This, however, is beyond our reach; and we are compelled to turn to a most ungenial soil, and seek for proofs of genuine godliness in the high places of the earth.

We will first advert to Samuel. This person, when a child, was placed in the midst of the most corrupting influences. Religion was at the lowest ebb, and public manners fearfully impure. Yet, amid all this, the child grew up to manhood, and entered upon an extensive course of public life, as a reformer, a judge, and a prophet. During this time the greatest changes took place in the circumstances and constitution of his country. But Samuel's devoted

piety was unchanged. He restored the purity of divine worship, and purged the nation of idolatry: he reformed the administration of justice, corrected the evils which had abounded in the jurisprudence of the land, and fully executed his vocation as a prophet of the Lord. In all this complication of difficulty and duty he stood unstained by crime: and when he placed his judicial conduct before the suffrages of the people, he was acquitted by the unanimous verdict of the nation. From youth to age, the testimony of inspiration applied to him, "Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men." 1 Sam. ii, 26. A case so unparalleled in the annals of the world demands recognition. And such results can, by no enlightened mind, be ascribed to anything but their true cause,—the living principle of sterling piety.

David next claims our attention. To write a detailed history of his religious life would indeed be a task replete with difficulty. We have, however, only to sketch this so far as it is necessary to illustrate the nature and influence of spiritual religion in his day. Let us glance at his youth, keeping sheep in the fields of Bethlehem: his simple but sincere confidence in Jehovah imbued his mind with such daring energy, that he attacked and destroyed a lion and a bear when they had taken a lamb from his flock. Nor even in the natural pride and inexperience of youth was this exploit regarded as any proof of his personal prowess. Long afterward, when he stood in circumstances which required all the resources of fortitude and faith, he referred to this as the work of God: "The Lord delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear." 1 Sam. xvii, 37. This was his sincere acknowledgment; and, as a proof of his sincerity, he is encouraged by this recollection to encounter yet greater danger.

We next see him at court, where he not only displayed unusual capacity in other respects, but the most lively faith in God. When Goliath defied the armies of Israel, young as he was among the thousands of his people, his pious soul shrank from the reproach, and, trusting in God, he dared to meet the giant of Gath. We have only to deal with this as a religious act; as such, it is most important. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews places David, on this account, in his ever-memorable list of worthies who were distinguished by their faith in God.

Soon after this we find David obliged to flee for his life from the court which he had saved by his valor, and driven from the army of which he was the greatest ornament. If, from this time to the death of Saul, we review the life of David, marking the gradual increase of his power, we may be led to admire his forbearance to-

wards his most inveterate foe, the good order and discipline which he succeeded in introducing into the irregular band which had gathered about him, and the adroitness and skill with which he contrived to provide for his support with the least possible injury to his country, and ultimately to escape all the snares of his foes. We may be struck with these features of his case; but in this general survey the heart is not read, his aspirations to God are not heard, the high principles by which he was influenced are not recognized, his religion is not seen. Yet we may form some definite idea of it; for authentic memorials of his thoughts, feelings, emotions, and desires,—in fact, a true and living portraiture of the state of his soul,—have been preserved even to our day. Reference has been already made to the poetic effusions of this fugitive chieftain, in respect of their merit as works of art: we shall now have to direct attention to them as exhibiting his religion. Our particular citations must be few and brief. When he escaped from his own house, his wife placing the *teraphim* in the bed, and saying he was sick, he composed Psalm lix, concluding his prayerful song with the words,—

“I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning:
For thou hast been my defense and refuge
In the day of my trouble.
Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing:
For God is my defense,
And the God of my mercy.” (Verses 16, 17.)

When, by the force of persecution, he was obliged to take refuge in Gath, and was there even compelled to feign himself mad to save his life, he could, in his retirement, throw off his disguise, and compose Psalm lvi. In the midst of this trouble he could sing of mercy:—

“In God I securely trust,
Nor will I fear what man can do unto me.
Thy vows are upon me, O God:
I will render praises unto thee.
For thou hast delivered my soul from death:
Wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling,
That I may walk before God in the land of the living?”
(Verses 10-13.)

When delivered from this danger, although still exposed to the full power and malice of Saul, he again breaks forth into song. Psalm xxxiv was then written, in which he celebrates the Divine faithfulness, and exults in God's continued protection:—

“The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants:
And none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.”
(Verse 22.)

A careful perusal of all those Psalms composed during the perilous

wanderings of David, will show that they contain abundant proofs of the genuineness and depths of his piety. They uniformly breathe a confidence in God, which nothing but genuine religion can inspire; and, beside this, we have other indubitable evidences of its existence and influence.

Communion with God :—

“O God, thou art my God;
Early will I seek thee:
My soul thirsteth for thee,
My flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land,
Where no water is.” (Psalm lxiii, 1.)

“I sought the Lord, and he heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.” (Psalm xxxiv, 4.)

“My soul shall be joyful in the Lord:
It shall rejoice in his salvation.” (Psalm xxxv, 9.)

Estimation of moral purity :—

“The righteous shall be glad in the Lord,
And shall trust in him;
And all the upright in heart shall glory.” (Psalm lxiv, 10.)

“Evil shall slay the wicked:
And they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.” (Psalm xxxiv, 21.)

“Depart from evil, and do good;
Seek peace, and pursue it.
The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous,
And his ears are open unto their cry.
The face of the Lord is against them that do evil,
To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.” (Verses 14–16.)

Aspirations after holiness :—

“Thou hast proved mine heart;
Thou hast visited me in the night;
Thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing:
I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.” (Psalm xvii, 3.)

“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness:
I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” (Verse 15.)

“O love the Lord, all ye his saints:
For the Lord preserveth the faithful.” (Psalm xxxi, 23.)

But it may be answered, “This evidence does not meet the case: the youthful piety of David is not denied; but see the shocking crimes into which he afterward fell,—lying, adultery, murder!” All this is sorrowfully admitted. And yet, even these very crimes, the depth and degradation of the fall, serve to illustrate the genuine nature of that religion which he thus lost, and afterward regained. In estimating the character of an individual, or the purity of his religion, it is of immense importance to ascertain whether sin is tolerated or denounced; whether lapses from moral purity are allowed by the

principles of religion, or occur in defiance of them. Prior to this time the worship of Baal-peor was associated with the most abominable impurity, and the rites of Moloch were stained with blood. Adultery and murder were parts of this Heathenism: but how stood the case with respect to David? He sinned deeply, foully, fearfully. But, when brought by the Spirit of God to a sense of his condition, what was his language? "I have sinned against the Lord." 2 Sam. xii, 13.

"Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to thy loving-kindness:
According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies
Blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.
For I acknowledge my transgressions:
And my sin is ever before me.
Create in me a clean heart, O God;
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from thy presence;
And take not thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;
And uphold me with thy free Spirit." (Psalm li, 1-3, 10-12.)

Here is a frank and unreserved acknowledgment of sin, and earnest prayers for pardon. One clause in this prayer, which we have purposely omitted, to be made the subject of special remark, casts important light upon the ground on which David hoped for mercy. It was not, as may be seen, because he regarded sin as not infinitely heinous in the Divine sight; nor was it on account of any fancied merit or deserving in his past or future works. No; his reliance is only on the blood of atonement.

"Purge me with hyssop,^o and I shall be clean:
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Verse 7.)

His prayer was heard, and the depth of his penitential sorrow is only equaled by the height of his grateful joy for the Divine pardon and forgiveness:—

"Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven,
And whose sin is covered.
Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity,
And in whose spirit there is no guile.
I acknowledge my sin unto thee,
And mine iniquity did I not hide:
I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,
And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." (Psalm xxxii, 1, 2, 5.)

And, having clearly realized forgiveness, he bursts forth into a song of praise:—

^o See Appendix, note 76.

"Praise the Lord, O my soul :
 And all that is within me, praise his holy name.
 Praise the Lord, O my soul,
 And forget not all his benefits :
 Who forgiveth all thy sins,
 And healeth all thine infirmities ;
 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction,
 And crowneth thee with loving-kindness
 And tender mercies.
 For look how high the heaven is
 In comparison of the earth,
 So great is his mercy also
 Toward them that fear him :
 Look how wide also
 The east is from the west,
 So far hath he set
 Our sins from us."^c (Psalm ciii, 1-4, 11, 12.)

It should, however, be remembered, that although God so graciously spoke peace to the mind of this penitent sinner, and, by communicating a sense of the Divine favor, thus filled him with grateful love; yet David never lost the impression of his demerit and unfaithfulness. Many years after this, when a wicked man furiously reviled him without cause, he refused to have him punished, saying, "The Lord hath said unto him, Curse David," 2 Sam. xvi, 10; as if, although rejoicing in a knowledge of pardon, he could not forgive himself; and, knowing that God had, on account of his transgression, sentenced him to bear unusual worldly tribulation, he meekly bowed his head, and patiently endured every portion of the infliction.

In concluding this sketch of the religious character of David, it may be observed that, although our limits have prevented our giving an extended investigation, the deficiency may easily be supplied by a careful perusal of the Book of Psalms. May we not ask, Was ever the broad seal of Divine approval more clearly set on the personal religion of any man, than is done by the existence and preservation of this inspired book? Here is David, a man of like passions with his brethren, confessedly frail and sinful, yet a man after God's own heart, who, in his general course of life, walked in such intimate communion with God, realized so fully the blessedness of his dispensation, that God was pleased to stereotype his pious exercises for the everlasting benefit of the church. The various emotions of David's mind,—his penitence and prayer, his joy and sorrow, his temptations and succors, his sins and pardons, his aspirations after God, and his hopes of future blessing,—are all sublimated into Divine poesy, and given to the church of God as a permanent text-book of holy exercise and devotional life. The feelings that swelled the breast of the young chief in the caves of Adullam, the fears that

^c Hales's arrangement and translation.

harassed him in the wilds of En-gedi, the sentiments sung by his clan of outlaws in the wilderness of Judea, as well as the language of his soul in after-life, are taken from perishable existence; and, imbued with the life of God by the Holy Ghost, are held forth as the standing exponents of the religious emotions, feelings, desires, and hopes of God's people, throughout all time. When it is considered that the dispensation in which he lived "had no glory," in comparison with that of gospel times, can we conceive of any higher testimony to the sterling piety of a man, than is given to that of David, when his own account of his spiritual exercises is held forth to the world to guide them in the way of life? From the days of David, these pious effusions have gladdened the hearts, elevated the hopes, and strengthened the faith, of unnumbered thousands of every age, clime, and color; and will continue to maintain their claims on the sanctified affections of believers till time shall be no more. If there is any truth in inspiration, any faith in history, any connection between divinely appointed means and the end to be accomplished, then the piety of David was deep and sincere.

Solomon, also, merits notice in respect of the religion of his age. He, too, in early youth was devoted to God, and "the Lord loved him." His conduct, in respect of the temple, and especially his prayer at the dedication, is described by a competent authority as "one of the noblest and most sublime compositions in the Bible; exhibiting the most exalted conceptions of the omnipresence of the Deity, and of his superintending providence, and of his peculiar protection of the Israelite nation, from the time that they came out of Egypt, and imploring pardon and forgiveness for all their sins and transgressions in the land, and during their ensuing captivities, in the prophetic spirit of Moses. 1 Kings viii, 12-60; 2 Chron. vi, 1-42.

"I have surely built thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in, forever.

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Lo, the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: how much less this house that I have built!

"Hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place: and when thou hearest, forgive!

"O Lord of gods, turn not away the face of thy Messiah; remember the mercies of David thy servant.'

"The conclusion of this admirable prayer shows how clearly Solomon understood the difference between the future Son of David the Messiah, and himself, whose presence, he prays, may not be averted or withdrawn from his people, the Jews, according to the mercies of

God, covenanted with his servant David, or 'for his servant David's sake;' as in the parallel passage; Psalm cxxxii, 10; 2 Chron. vi, 42. For surely Solomon could not possibly apply the term 'Messiah,' or 'Anointed,' in this place to himself, without incurring the imputation of presumption or profaneness, especially on so solemn an occasion. He could not be ignorant that his father David had applied that term to the Son of God, (Psalm ii, 2-7;) and also Ethan, in his hymn, (Psalm lxxxix, 20,) explanatory of Nathan's prophecy, (2 Sam. vii, 14;) both borrowing it from Hannah's thanksgiving, in which it was first introduced into the language of prophecy. 1 Sam. ii, 10."—*Hales's Analysis*, vol. ii, p. 360.

Like his father, Solomon was also divinely appointed to contribute to the volume of inspired truth. His Proverbs, and Song of Songs, although but a very small part of his literary productions, being written under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, are preserved for the edification of the church, God by his Holy Spirit laying the sanctified intellect of the wisest man under contribution for the benefit of his people. Ecclesiastes, too, is attributed to Solomon; but the authorship of this canonical book raises a question of great importance to the religious history of this prince. If, as all antiquity teaches, he was the author of this book, when did he compose it? For Solomon, like his father, fell into sin. He departed from God, although not in the same manner. He was not hurried into transgression by the violent impulse of a guilty passion, which, by the force of circumstances, drew him into other crimes. He rejected Jehovah, and deliberately went astray, worshiping, and fostering the worship of, heathen idols. If, then, Solomon wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes, was it before or after this fearful apostasy? Many commentators have charitably hoped the latter, and brilliant pictures of his restoration to virtue and religion have been painted; but are they true? It must be distinctly understood that we offer no opinion as to the final destiny of Solomon: this is beyond our province. But we may inquire whether the facts of the case warrant the hope that he was restored to the Divine favor, and wrote the book in question after his fall.

If we take the history of his life, as recorded in holy Scripture, it certainly does not support this opinion. Solomon, we are told, loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites. This offense is recorded as if happening in advanced life; but the consummation of his guilt is distinctly said to have taken place when he "was old." 1 Kings xi, 4. Then, he "went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the

Ammonites;" (verse 5 ;) and he built altars to these and other false deities. And "the Lord was angry with Solomon." Verse 9. After this fatal announcement, we have nothing recorded respecting him but his punishment and death. He is threatened with the loss of ten tribes, troubles gather about his throne, because "his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel." But no ray of light sheds hope on the scene, by intimating the penitence of the king. And in the absence of such intimation the mind falls back upon the dying charge of his father to him, and instinctively invests its concluding terms with prophetic force: "If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." 1 Chron. xxviii, 9.

If the history fails to give us light on this subject, a rational investigation into the circumstances of the case does not supply the lacking probability. Here is a man who, although gifted with unequalled intellectual power and cultivation, is so infatuated by the prevalence of an irregular and unbridled passion, that he has one thousand women selected and shut up for himself alone. And this, be it remembered, is not merely a piece of state pageantry, not a question of oriental policy: it is a means of carnal gratification, to obtain which he daringly violates the most plain and positive commandments of God. Nay, more; so devoted is he, even in his old age, to these sensual pursuits, that he enters into the views of these women, submits to their influence, so far as to build a temple to each of all the gods of "all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods." 1 Kings xi, 5-8. Now, we will not ask whether, after this, his repentance is probable, for we set no limit to Divine mercy; but we will ask whether, in the absence of all information on the subject, we are warranted to conclude that an old man, in such circumstances, should not only repent, and be restored to piety, but that he should afterward write an elaborate philosophical treatise on that most important and disputed question, What is the sovereign good of man? The improbability of this is greatly strengthened by the absence of all reference to repentance in this composition. Here is nothing like the frank humiliation of his father; there is not, indeed, anything like the language of penitence or confession of sin, in its proper sense, in the whole Book. We therefore incline to the opinion that, if Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes, (which appears probable,) he did it in his middle age, before his fall. Nor do we see anything in the discovered vanity of earthly things which it exhibits, that might not then have been written by him, or any other man of enlightened mind.

Having traced the fearful declension of religion among the He-

brews in the early part of this period, and its subsequent revival and ascendancy, in connection with the personal piety of some of the greatest ornaments of the Hebrew church, we may now, with great advantage, endeavor to ascertain the opinions which prevailed respecting some important doctrinal subjects. The nature and extent of the efficacy of sacrifice affords the first subject of inquiry.

Reference may here be made to the fact that sacrifice was regarded in patriarchal times as instituted for the express purpose of averting the wrath of God. This, like every other important truth, has been controverted; but it stands too well attested to be successfully impugned. "The Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks, and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly." Job xlii, 7, 8. The same truth is taught in the beginning of the Book of Job, (chap. i, 4, 5,) as well as in other parts of holy Scripture.

Having premised this, we observe that the sacrifices prescribed by the Mosaic ritual were not confined to mere ceremonial uncleanness, or sins of inadvertency, but were intended to meet, and to atone for moral iniquity. Our limits forbid an exposition of the objections which have been made to this tenet: we confine ourselves to the proof of it. That cases of inadvertency were thus provided for, and that sins committed by those who did not know they were offending until afterward, are spoken of as atoned for by sacrifice,* is freely admitted; but it is certain that this is only one class of offenses, and that open and deliberate wickedness was also atoned for. Lev. vi, 1-7. "Now, that these atonements, in cases of moral transgression, involved a real and literal remission of the offense, that is, of the penalty annexed to it, will appear from considering not only the rigorous sanction of the Mosaic law in general, by which he who did not continue in all the words of the law to do them, was pronounced accursed; (Gal. iii, 10; Deut. xxvii, 26;) and, consequently, subjected to the severest temporary inflictions; but also the particular cases in which the piacular sacrifices are directly stated to have procured a release from the temporal punishments specifically annexed to the transgression: as in the cases of fraud, false swearing, &c., which, with the punishments annexed by the law, and the remission procured by the piacular oblation, may be seen enumerated by Grotius, (*De Satisfact. Christi*, cap. 10,) and still more fully by Richie.

* See Leviticus iv, 13, 14, 23-28; v, 2, 3, 17, 18; Numbers xv, 24.

(‘Peculiar Doctrines,’ vol. i, pp. 232–252.) Houbigant also speaks of it as a matter beyond question, that, in such offenses as admitted of expiation under the Mosaic law, a release from the temporal penalty of the transgression was the necessary result of the atonement. Hallet says, that the sacrifices procured for the offender a deliverance from the punishment of moral guilt, which was appointed by the law; and instances the case of theft, in which, though the offender was liable to be cut off by the miraculous judgment of God, yet the sacrifice had the virtue of releasing from that immediate death, which the law had denounced against that particular sin. (‘Notes and Disc.,’ pp. 276–278.)

“That the remission of sins obtained by the Levitical sacrifices was a remission only of temporal punishments, cannot weaken the general argument; as the sanctions of the law under which the sacrifices were offered were themselves but temporary. The remission of the penalty due to the transgression was still real and substantial: the punishment was averted from the offender, who conformed to the appointed rite; and the sacrificial atonement was consequently in such cases an act of propitiation. The sacrifices of the law, indeed, considered merely as the performance of a ceremonial duty, could operate only to the reversal of a ceremonial forfeiture, or the remission of a temporal punishment; that is, they could propitiate God only in his temporal relation to his chosen people, as their Sovereign: and for this plain reason,—because the ostensible performance of the rite being but an act of external submission and homage, when not accompanied with an internal submission of mind and a sincere repentance, it could acquit the offender only in reference to that external law, which exacted obedience as a civil prince. In such cases, the Jewish sacrifices, merely as legal observances, operated only to the temporal benefits annexed by the Levitical institution to those expressions of allegiance; but, as genuine and sincere acts of worship and penitence, whenever the piety of the offender rendered them such, they must likewise have operated to procure that spiritual remission and acceptance which, antecedent to, and independent of, the Levitical ordinances, they are found in several parts of Scripture to have been effectual to obtain.”—*Magee on Atonement*, vol. i, pp. 346–349.

It would be easy to show that this moral effect of the Jewish sacrifices is in perfect agreement with what the apostle says, that “they could not make perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.” Heb. ix, 9; x, 1. They could not, when performed merely as external rites; but, when offered in true spiritual-mindedness, and connected by the faith of the offerer through the predictions and

promises of God with the sacrifice of the great Redeemer, they could and did impart a rich amount of spiritual comfort and blessing. And that this was the opinion of the later Jews, is evident from the fact that the apostle, in the tenth chapter of the Hebrews, not only asserts the inefficacy of the Mosaic sacrifice for the full and perfect remission of sins, but takes considerable pains to prove the point; a circumstance which shows that, instead of confining the virtue of the sacrifice to merely external or ritual purposes, the fault of the age was to ascribe to them a power of atoning for moral guilt independently of, and without reference to, the sacrifice of the Messiah.

It will be necessary further to illustrate this important subject, by showing that the Mosaic sacrifices were vicarious and propitiatory.

Perhaps no doctrines have been opposed with a fiercer array of logic, wit, philosophy, and ridicule, than these. And with good reason: for those persons who reject the atonement of Christ, have felt a deep interest in repudiating the vicarious and propitiatory character of the Mosaic sacrifices. Yet, notwithstanding all these efforts, no doctrines stand before us in clearer light, or supported by a greater weight of Scriptural evidence. The case is stated with very great perspicuity and strength by Dr. Magee. I have "used the expression '*vicarious import*' rather than '*vicarious*,' to avoid furnishing any color to the idle charge made against the doctrine of atonement, of supposing a real substitution in the room of the offender, and a literal translation of his guilt and punishment to the immolated victim; a thing utterly incomprehensible, as neither guilt nor punishment can be conceived but with reference to consciousness, which cannot be transferred. But to be exposed to suffering in consequence of another's guilt, and thereby, at the same time, to represent to the offender, and to release him from, the punishment due to his transgression, involves no contradiction whatever. In this sense the suffering of the animal may be conceived a substitute for the punishment of the offender; inasmuch as, in virtue of that suffering, the sinner is released. If it be asked, 'What connection can subsist between the death of the animal, and the acquittal of the sinner?' I answer, without hesitation, I know not. To unfold divine truths by human philosophy, belongs to those who hold opinions widely different from mine on the subject of atonement. To the Christian, it should be sufficient that Scripture has clearly pronounced this connection to subsist. That the death of the animal could possess no such intrinsic virtue, is manifest; but that Divine appointment could bestow upon it this expiatory power, will not surely be denied."—*Atonement*, vol. i, p. 353.

That this Divine appointment really existed, is capable of abun-

dant proof. Let us refer to Lev. v, 15, 16: "If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord, he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest." Here is the appointed fine for the trespass; and, if this requirement had closed the case, the contribution could only be regarded as a mulct or fine on account of the transgression. But the law adds, "He shall bring for his trespass unto the Lord a ram without blemish: and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering, and it shall be forgiven him." Thus we see that, so far from the sacrifice being regarded as a fine, it is carefully and prominently distinguished from it. "Nor can the ceremonies, with which the trespass and sin offerings were accompanied, agree with any notion but that of their vicarious character. The worshiper, conscious of his trespass, brought an animal, his own property, to the door of the tabernacle. This was not a eucharistical act, not a memorial of mercies received, but of sins committed. He laid his hands upon the head of the animal, the symbolical act of transferring punishment; then slew it with his own hand, and delivered it to the priest, who burnt the fat upon the altar, and, having sprinkled part of the blood upon the altar, and in some cases upon the offerer himself, poured the rest at the bottom of the altar. And thus, we are told, 'the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.' So clearly is it made manifest by these actions, and by the description of their nature and end, that the animal bore the punishment of the offender, and that by this appointment he was reconciled to God, and obtained the forgiveness of his offenses."—*Rev. R. Watson's Works*, vol. xi, p. 95.

The entire ceremonial of the great day of atonement may be referred to as supplying further and very important evidence in support of this opinion. The vicarious and propitiatory character of these sacrifices is evident, and can only be got rid of by deranging the whole scope of the service, and explaining away the plainest declarations of Holy Scripture.

But, although a particular examination of this and other passages of Scripture would clearly establish this doctrine, we prefer calling attention to the fact, that the united judgment of Heathens and Jews is in accordance with that which we have propounded. The current of primitive tradition, although greatly corrupted, still bears ample testimony that man was alienated from an offended God in consequence of sin, and that no mere penitential sorrow was sufficient to reconcile him to his Maker. Herodotus makes the wise

man of Athens describe the Deity "as viewing men with malignant aspects."—*Clio*, xxxii. Porphyry asserts "that there was wanting some universal method of delivering men's souls, which no sect of philosophy had ever yet found out."—*August. De Civit. Dei*, lib. x, cap. 32. Tacitus intimates an opinion "that the gods interfere in human concerns but to punish."—*Hist.*, lib i, cap. 3. These authorities (and they might be easily multiplied) sufficiently attest the important fact that fear was the ruling element in the religion of the Heathen world. It is equally manifest that propitiatory sacrifice was regarded as the only means of averting Divine wrath. Parkhurst does not scruple to say, "It is known to every one who is acquainted with the mythology of the Heathen, how generally they retained the idea of an atonement or expiation for sin; although they expected it from a false object."—*Lexicon*.

Numerous instances in proof of this might be cited from Homer, Hesiod, Plutarch, and other Heathen writers. It will be more important, however, to ascertain the opinions of the Hebrews. The Old Testament contains the theology of the early Jews. And that on this subject its teaching gives not merely the opinions of a class, but the belief of the people, is proved by the similar faith of rabbins of a later date. "It is notorious that the stated confession made by the Jews, in offering up the victim in sacrifice, concludes with these words, 'Let this' (the victim) 'be my expiation:' meaning, 'Let the evils, which in justice should have fallen on my head, light upon the head of the victim which I now offer.' Thus Baal Aruch says, 'that wherever the expression, *Let me be another's expiation*, is used, it is the same as if it had been said, *Let me be put in his room, that I may bear his guilt*; and this, again, is equivalent to saying, *Let this act, whereby I take on me his transgression, obtain for him his pardon*.' In like manner Solomon Jarchi (*Sanhedr.*, chap. ii) says, 'Let us be your expiation, signifies, *Let us be put in your place, that the evil which should have fallen upon you may all light on us*:' and, in the same way, Obadiah de Bartenora and other learned Jews explain this formula.

"Again, respecting the burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin, Machmanides, on Lev. i, says, 'that it was right that the offerer's own blood should be shed, and his body burnt; but that the Creator, in his mercy, hath accepted this victim from him, as a vicarious substitute (תמורה), and an atonement (כפר), that its blood should be poured out *instead of* his blood, and its life stand *in place of* his life.' R. Bechai, also, on Lev. i, uses the very same language. Isaac Ben Arama, on Leviticus, likewise says, that 'the offender, when he beholds the victim, on account of his sin, slain, skinned,

cut in pieces, and burnt with fire upon the altar, should reflect, that thus he must have been treated, had not God in his clemency accepted *this expiation for his life.*' David de Pomis, in like manner, pronounces the victim the 'vicarious substitute' (תמורה) for the offerer. And Isaac Abarbanel affirms, in his preface to Leviticus, that 'the offerer deserved that his blood should be poured out, and his body burnt, for his sins; but that God, in his clemency, accepted from him the victim as his *vicarious substitute* (תמורה) and *expiation* (כפר), whose blood was poured out *in place of his blood*, and its life given *in lieu of his life.*'"—*Magee on the Atonement*, vol. i, p. 262.

Very conflicting opinions have also been held by Christian divines respecting the views which the Hebrews, at that time, had of the supreme God. It has been said, that the Israelites of *this* day made a distinction between God, when regarded as the Lord of the whole earth, and when viewed merely as the Patron and Protector of the children of Israel: that, when addressed or spoken of in the first character, "the language employed is truly sublime and appropriate:" that, on the contrary, when spoken of as merely "the tutelary God of the Hebrews," the expressions are very deficient in "dignity and elevation." "The minute details of the Levitical law," and "the constant interpositions of God which accompanied the exercise of the Mosaical government," are spoken of as instances. It is alleged that a reader, looking at the latter class of references, "will persuade himself that, in adopting such crude notions of Divine providence, it would be impossible to avoid the rudest shocks to his faith, and the grossest insult to his piety."—*Russel's Conn.*, vol i, p. 248. Notwithstanding the general excellence of the work from which these passages are taken, we think they give a mistaken view of the subject, in an objectionable manner.

The sentiments and confidence which the learned bishop ascribes to an infant state of society, namely, that the Divine attributes shall be brought down and accommodated to the multitude of our dangers and necessities; that our religious confidence shall be confirmed, not only in regard to the great facts of creation and providence, but also to the full extent of our own individual concerns; these views are, in our judgment, proper and suitable to the religious mind in all states of society.

It may, perhaps, be freely admitted, that a part of the Mosaic ceremonial was, in some sense, adapted to the limited knowledge, and more so to the limited faith, of the early Israelites. But, notwithstanding this, it does not appear certain to our mind that this distinct twofold view of God was taken by them at all. Sometimes

they thought and spoke of God as the Creator and Preserver of all things; but then it was the God of Israel who was so extolled. And if, on other occasions, they spoke of Jehovah as encamping about Zion, and defending or succoring Israel, it was the Almighty God in whom they trusted.

The important truth cannot be too often iterated, that the Mosaic economy was not given to a community who previously had no religion, or to a people who had picked up a few floating religious notions in Egypt or Syria. The sons of Jacob knew the God of their fathers; and the Mosaic institutes, based on the general knowledge and religious truth of the patriarchal dispensation, were intended to bring them, in all the multiplicity of their temporal concerns, into immediate and constant dependence upon the God of heaven. Their national well-being, their personal safety, "their basket and their store," were the result of his constant supervision, guidance, and blessing. But this did not arise from their "limiting the Holy One of Israel" to a district of the earth, as though he were less than supreme. It arose out of that merciful arrangement by which the Almighty had selected them to be his peculiar people. If, therefore, clearer views of the Divine Being, and the various manifestations of his attributes to mankind, were realized more fully at the close of this period than they had been at the beginning, it is to be attributed, not to new revelations of doctrine, still less to an improved state of society; but to the exercise of a more vigorous faith, and to an improved tone of religious feeling and spirit.

With respect to the knowledge of the immortality of the soul, and of future rewards and punishment, little need be said. It has been already shown that these doctrines were known to the patriarchs and to Moses, and that they continued more or less operative on the public mind throughout the various changes to which Israel was subjected. The best proof of this is, that in the time of David and Solomon, when religion revived, and a religious literature began to rise into existence, without any new authorized revelation, these doctrines are found animating the hopes of the pious, and occupying the thoughts of the learned. The unseen world is recognized by history, and is made the subject of lofty song by the Psalmist, and the basis of ethical argumentation throughout the Book of Ecclesiastes.

But we are told that the Jews knew nothing of the separate existence of Satan, until the Babylonish captivity; that up to that time evil and good were alike supposed to emanate from God. That they believed in the existence of evil angels, is admitted; but it is contended that these evil angels, equally with holy ones, were re-

garded as under the constant and immediate control of the omnipotent God.

To these statements, in a qualified sense, we are disposed to subscribe; and the subject will be further investigated in a future chapter. The fact that the knowledge of the Hebrews on this doctrine was imperfect in the days of David and Solomon, is fully admitted; and if a reason for this ignorance is demanded, a sufficient answer is at hand. The facts of the primitive temptation were well known to the early patriarchs, and handed down to their posterity. These facts involved the doctrine of fallen spirits, and also of one pre-eminent adversary of man. But his true position, the extent of his malice and power, his direct rebellion against God, and systematic aggression on man,—all these are parts of the great doctrine of redemption. If they had been fully made known, what but a perfect display of the whole economy of grace could have saved men from absolute despair? If the enemy had been fully displayed, the Saviour must have been, with equal clearness, revealed. As, then, it was the Divine purpose to make a gradual development of the economy of redemption, so it was necessary that the power and influence of Satan should as gradually be disclosed to the world.

But then this state of things did not arise out of the local position of the Israelites, nor was this knowledge elicited by the learned labor of philosophers. The case was a part of the Divine purpose, and was supplied by God in his own way. It is remarkable that the Saviour and Satan stand before us in the very dawn of revelation; and men of prayer and spiritual-mindedness, in the earliest times, apprehended much of their true character. And as it pleased God to bring out the purposes of his grace through the instrumentality of successive prophets; so the malignity and power of Satan, and the omnipotence and triumph of Christ, were fully revealed; until at length, "in the fullness of time," when Christ appeared on earth, there was, notwithstanding Sadducean infidelity, a more clear and general knowledge of Satan,—his power, influence, and aggression on human happiness,—than had ever before existed in the world.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF REMARKABLE EVENTS, FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MONARCHY TO THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.

	B. C.
SAUL anointed King	1099
— Sins by offering Sacrifice in his first Philistine War	1097
Jonathan defeats the Philistines	1095
Saul's Offense in the Case of the Amalekites	1089
David born	—
— Privately anointed King by Samuel	1089
— Kills Goliath, the Philistine Giant	—
— Marries Michal, the Daughter of Saul	1084
— Is compelled to flee from the Cruelty of Saul	1083
Samuel dies	1081
Saul consults the Woman of Endor, and is slain	1059
David anointed King of Judah	—
Abner maintains Ishbosheth on the Throne of Israel	—
— Is slain by Joab, Ishbosheth also assassinated	1052
David King over all Israel	—
— Takes Jerusalem from the Jebusites, and makes it his Capital	1045
— Subdues the Philistines in two pitched Battles	1044
The Ark of God placed in the Tabernacle of David	1043
Nathan prophesies of the Messiah as the Son of David	1042
David sins in the Case of Bathsheba	1041
Solomon born	1039
The infamous Conduct of Amnon	1038
Absalom kills Amnon	1036
— Returns to Jerusalem after three years' Exile	1033
— Is pardoned by his Father, and received at Court	1031
— Rebels, assumes the Government, and expels David from Jerusalem ..	1027
— Slain in Battle, and David restored	—
David sins in numbering the People, and is punished by a terrible Pestilence	1023
Solomon succeeds to the Throne, and David dies	1019
The Temple begun	1016
— Finished	1009
Solomon prosecutes his extensive Schemes of commercial Policy, sends a Navy to the East, and builds Baalbec and Palmyra	995
— Led into Idolatry by his Heathen Wives	—
— Builds Temples for profane Rites on the Mount of Corruption	985
— Dies, and is succeeded by Rehoboam	979
The Division of the Kingdom immediately follows	—

CHAPTER VI.

THE HISTORY AND RELIGION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE DIVISION OF THE HEBREWS INTO TWO INDEPENDENT KINGDOMS—Jeroboam, the first King of Israel, selects Shechem for his Capital—Establishes the Worship of golden Calves at Bethel and Dan—The Consequences of this Conduct—Jeroboam rebuked by a Prophet—Miraculously punished and restored—The Death of the King's Son, and the total Ruin of the royal House, predicted by Ahijah—War with Judah—Israel defeated—Nadab reigns—Is slain, and succeeded by Baasha, who prosecutes the War with Judah successfully—Israel invaded by the Syrians—Jehu the Prophet predicts the ruin of the House of Baasha—Elah succeeds his Father, and is slain—A civil War between two rival Factions, headed by Omri and Tibni—The Death of Tibni—Omri reigns—Ahab succeeds his Father—Marries Jezebel—Introduces Phenician Idolatry—And persecutes the Worshipers of Jehovah—Jericho rebuilt, and Joshua's Malediction verified—The Prophet Elijah—The Three Years of Drought and Famine—Ruinous Condition of the Kingdom—Elijah meets Ahab—The Miracle of Carmel—The Prophets of Baal slain—Rain given—Elijah threatened with Death—Escapes—Is sent to anoint Hazael King of Syria, Jehu King of Israel, and Elisha to be Prophet—Israel invaded by Benhadad—Delivered according to the Word of a Prophet—The Invasion repeated the next Year—And again repulsed—The Death of Naboth—Prophecy of Elijah—Fearful Doom of the House of Ahab—Jehoshaphat unites with Ahab to war against Ramoth—Prophecy of Micaiah—Death of Ahab—Ahaziah reigns—Fails in his Attempt to restore the maritime Commerce with Ophir—Jehoram reigns—Elijah translated, and succeeded by Elisha, who works Miracles—Makes known the Counsels of Benhadad—And defeats the Designs of the Syrians—Samaris besieged—Suffers from a terrible Famine—Is divinely delivered—Hazael succeeds to the Throne of Syria—Jehu anointed King—Kills Jehoram, Jezebel, and all the Children of Ahab—Destroys the Prophets of Baal, and prohibits that Idolatry—Jehoahaz succeeds to the Throne—Israel suffers from the Syrians under Hazael—Joash reigns—Prosperes in his War with Syria—Triumphs over Judah—Jeroboam II. reigns, and greatly increases the Power of Israel—Hosea and Amos prophecy—Zechariah reigns—Is killed by Shallum, who is destroyed by Manahem—In his Reign Assyria invades Israel—Pekahiah reigns—Is slain by Pekah, who succeeds, and forms an Alliance with Syria—Vanquishes Judah—Hoshea reigns—Is dethroned, and the Kingdom destroyed by the Assyrians.

REFERENCE has been already made to the prediction of Ahijah, respecting the alienation of ten tribes from the house of David, the Divine appointment of Jeroboam to be the sovereign of this new state, and the accomplishment of these predictions after the death of Solomon, through the rash and impolitic conduct of his son toward the deputies of Israel. (See *Appendix*, note 77.)

This national division was the most disastrous event which had occurred to the Israelites since they had been a people. They had not unfrequently been reduced to great straits, had been subjected to fierce aggression and cruel tyranny; but they had been united. Even the fatal conflict of the other tribes with Benjamin, although ruinous to the offenders at the time, was instantly succeeded by

compassionate feelings, and generous sympathy, under the fostering influence of which, the almost exterminated tribe soon arose to its former prosperity. And although, under the judges, the several tribes were not cemented together by any national compact or political organization, yet they felt associated by a bond of brotherhood, and were ready, on any great emergency, to assert their common nationality. Now, however, Israel is not temporarily divided by a sudden quarrel, nor partially united under the influence of sectional clanship: the nation is permanently divided into two separate and rival states. This schism was productive of more injurious consequences to the Hebrew commonwealth, than would have resulted from a similar separation to any other people. There was never a country whose religious doctrines, ecclesiastical system, civil polity, and public institutions, were so identified with the national unity, as in the case of the Hebrews. It will also be observed, that the division which Jeroboam effected was, in many respects, singularly unequal. He obtained by far the largest territory, and the greatest population; advantages, however, which were perhaps fully counterbalanced by the kingdom of Judah still retaining the centre of the national religion, the high priesthood, and the capital. (See *Appendix*, note 78.)

Shechem was at first selected as the seat of government for the new kingdom. This city had been given to the Levites, and was distinguished in the early history of the Hebrews as the place where frequent national assemblies were held, but was subsequently ruined by Abimelech. It must, however, have been soon after rebuilt; for, at this time, it was evidently a large and important city.

As might have been expected, the first great difficulty which the king of Israel encountered, while endeavoring to consolidate his power, arose out of the unity which pervaded the religious institutions of the people. He said, "If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam." 1 Kings xii, 27. On the principles of worldly policy, this conclusion might be correct. But Jeroboam knew that he had been specially appointed by God to rule over this portion of Israel, and that the tenure upon which he held the sceptre was this: "If thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments; I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house." 1 Kings xi, 38. The son of Nebat also knew that the sundering of the kingdom was an immediate consequence of Solomon's idolatry. Verse 33. He had, therefore, in the independence of the ten tribes,

CHAPTER VI.

THE HISTORY AND RELIGION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE DIVISION OF THE HEBREWS INTO TWO INDEPENDENT KINGDOMS—

Jeroboam, the first King of Israel, selects Shechem for his Capital—Establishes the Worship of golden Calves at Bethel and Dan—The Consequences of this Conduct—Jeroboam rebuked by a Prophet—Miraculously punished and restored—The Death of the King's Son, and the total Ruin of the royal House, predicted by Ahijah—War with Judah—Israel defeated—Nadab reigns—Is slain, and succeeded by Baasha, who prosecutes the War with Judah successfully—Israel invaded by the Syrians—Jehu the Prophet predicts the ruin of the House of Baasha—Elah succeeds his Father, and is slain—A civil War between two rival Factions, headed by Omri and Tibni—The Death of Tibni—Omri reigns—Ahab succeeds his Father—Marries Jezebel—Introduces Phenician Idolatry—And persecutes the Worshipers of Jehovah—Jericho rebuilt, and Joshua's Malediction verified—The Prophet Elijah—The Three Years of Drought and Famine—Ruinous Condition of the Kingdom—Elijah meets Ahab—The Miracle of Carmel—The Prophets of Baal slain—Rain given—Elijah threatened with Death—Escapes—Is sent to anoint Hazael King of Syria, Jehu King of Israel, and Elisha to be Prophet—Israel invaded by Benhadad—Delivered according to the Word of a Prophet—The Invasion repeated the next Year—And again repulsed—The Death of Naboth—Prophecy of Elijah—Fearful Doom of the House of Ahab—Jehoshaphat unites with Ahab to war against Ramoth—Prophecy of Micaiah—Death of Ahab—Ahaziah reigns—Fails in his Attempt to restore the maritime Commerce with Ophir—Jehoram reigns—Elijah translated, and succeeded by Elisha, who works Miracles—Makes known the Counsels of Benhadad—And defeats the Designs of the Syrians—Samaria besieged—Suffers from a terrible Famine—Is divinely delivered—Hazael succeeds to the Throne of Syria—Jehu anointed King—Kills Jehoram, Jezebel, and all the Children of Ahab—Destroys the Prophets of Baal, and prohibits that Idolatry—Jehoahaz succeeds to the Throne—Israel suffers from the Syrians under Hazael—Joash reigns—Prosperes in his War with Syria—Triumphs over Judah—Jeroboam II. reigns, and greatly increases the Power of Israel—Hosea and Amos prophecy—Zechariah reigns—Is killed by Shallum, who is destroyed by Manahem—In his Reign Assyria invades Israel—Pekahiah reigns—Is slain by Pekah, who succeeds, and forms an Alliance with Syria—Vanquishes Judah—Hoshea reigns—Is dethroned, and the Kingdom destroyed by the Assyrians.

REFERENCE has been already made to the prediction of Ahijah, respecting the alienation of ten tribes from the house of David, the Divine appointment of Jeroboam to be the sovereign of this new state, and the accomplishment of these predictions after the death of Solomon, through the rash and impolitic conduct of his son toward the deputies of Israel. (See *Appendix*, note 77.)

This national division was the most disastrous event which had occurred to the Israelites since they had been a people. They had not unfrequently been reduced to great straits, had been subjected to fierce aggression and cruel tyranny; but they had been united. Even the fatal conflict of the other tribes with Benjamin, although ruinous to the offenders at the time, was instantly succeeded by

compassionate feelings, and generous sympathy, under the fostering influence of which, the almost exterminated tribe soon arose to its former prosperity. And although, under the judges, the several tribes were not cemented together by any national compact or political organization, yet they felt associated by a bond of brotherhood, and were ready, on any great emergency, to assert their common nationality. Now, however, Israel is not temporarily divided by a sudden quarrel, nor partially united under the influence of sectional clanship: the nation is permanently divided into two separate and rival states. This schism was productive of more injurious consequences to the Hebrew commonwealth, than would have resulted from a similar separation to any other people. There was never a country whose religious doctrines, ecclesiastical system, civil polity, and public institutions, were so identified with the national unity, as in the case of the Hebrews. It will also be observed, that the division which Jeroboam effected was, in many respects, singularly unequal. He obtained by far the largest territory, and the greatest population; advantages, however, which were perhaps fully counterbalanced by the kingdom of Judah still retaining the centre of the national religion, the high priesthood, and the capital. (See *Appendix*, note 78.)

Shechem was at first selected as the seat of government for the new kingdom. This city had been given to the Levites, and was distinguished in the early history of the Hebrews as the place where frequent national assemblies were held, but was subsequently ruined by Abimelech. It must, however, have been soon after rebuilt; for, at this time, it was evidently a large and important city.

As might have been expected, the first great difficulty which the king of Israel encountered, while endeavoring to consolidate his power, arose out of the unity which pervaded the religious institutions of the people. He said, "If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam." 1 Kings xii, 27. On the principles of worldly policy, this conclusion might be correct. But Jeroboam knew that he had been specially appointed by God to rule over this portion of Israel, and that the tenure upon which he held the sceptre was this: "If thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments; I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house." 1 Kings xi, 38. The son of Nebat also knew that the sundering of the kingdom was an immediate consequence of Solomon's idolatry. Verse 33. He had, therefore, in the independence of the ten tribes,

and in his elevation to the sovereignty, a clear demonstration of the direct government and almighty interposition which Jehovah exercised in respect of his people. And, as if to give the greatest possible effect to these convictions, at this very time the Lord interposed to save Israel from an invasion which, in their unprepared state, they would, in all probability, have been unable to resist. Rehoboam, on perceiving the extent of the defection, collected an army of one hundred and eighty thousand men, and prepared to reduce the revolted tribes; but the hostile movement was prevented by the interposition of the prophet Shemaiah, who, in the name of the Lord, forbade the aggression.

No man was ever placed in a position of more solemn and weighty responsibility than that which Jeroboam occupied on this occasion. The national, religious, and political destinies of ten tribes of Israel were virtually placed in his hands; and the consequences were most disastrous. It may, indeed, be said, that he could not see how it was possible for his authority to be maintained, if the people went up to Jerusalem to worship: perhaps so. Nor could Abraham see *how* he was to be supported and sustained in his wandering career; yet "he went out, not knowing whither he went." Heb. xi, 8. Nor did Moses know *how* he was to extricate Israel from the house of bondage, and bring them into the Land of Promise; yet "he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king." Verse 27. Joshua did not know *how* he was to cross the Jordan and conquer Canaan; but by faith he obeyed God, and was crowned with success. Hebrew history presented many noble examples to the mind of the son of Nebat: the word of God assured him continued success, if obedient: his present elevation, as a fulfillment of Ahijah's prophecy, was a pledge of the faithfulness of Jehovah: he saw, in the doom of Solomon, and in the dismemberment of the kingdom, the consequences of disobedience: Heaven looked on the ripening purpose of the man, intrusted with the decision of a question so momentous. Was obedient faith in God, or an unbelieving reliance upon carnal policy, to be adopted as the ground of his confidence, and the principle of his future conduct? Alas! the latter prevailed; and from that hour Israel sunk from her glorious elevation. Jeroboam decided on endeavoring to prevent his subjects from attending the temple at Jerusalem, by establishing two places for worship within his own dominions. (See *Appendix*, note 79.)

Before any reference is made to the character and consequences of this proceeding, as a religious defection, it may be observed, that it was more than this. Jeroboam is seen here as the head and representative of the state, formally and of set purpose reject-

ing the command, and resisting the declared will, of Jehovah. Not only, therefore, does he, by this action, repudiate the theocracy, and alienate his kingdom from that special providential interposition which God's covenant with Israel guaranteed to his people; but he places himself with them before God, as transgressors, and under the ban of the Divine law.

Having determined what line of policy to adopt, the best means of proceeding was the subject of grave consideration; but at length it was decided. The king "took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto"* the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan." 1 Kings xii, 28, 29. In this instance the great object of the innovation is manifest: it was to prevent the people from going to Jerusalem, and not for the sake of establishing idolatrous worship. The mode adopted appears to have been designed to accomplish the intended end, with the smallest apparent departure from the service of the Mosaic law.

These two calves, which were mutilated imitations of the cherubim,† were accordingly made, and set up in Bethel and Dan, as objects of worship. But even in its political results, this measure was not successful; for the priests and Levites which were in all the coasts of Israel abandoned their possessions, and repaired to Jerusalem and other cities of Judah, where they took up their abode. Nor did these ecclesiastics alone retire; for "after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers." 2 Chron. xi, 16. And the sacred writer immediately adds, "So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong," verse 17; so it follows that these important emigrations must have greatly weakened Israel. The loss of all the priests, Levites, and devout worshipers of Jehovah resident in these dominions must have been a terrible blow to the interests of the infant state.

It is not absolutely certain, but very probable, that Jeroboam invited the priests and Levites to minister before his golden calves, and that they refused. The *prestige* of their name and character would have done much to recommend this religious defection; and it is scarcely possible that the king should have neglected such an important advantage. If, however, this offer was made, it was nobly rejected. He then appears to have prohibited their attendance

* The Septuagint of this text reads, "And said to the people," which is undoubtedly the sense of the writer.

† Horsley on Hosea.

in their usual courses at the temple, 2 Chron. xi, 14; upon which they left his kingdom. As a political expedient, therefore, this effort of Jeroboam failed: it was intended to avoid a possible and prospective danger, and it induced an immediate and serious loss.

But the measure is chiefly important in its religious aspects and results. It has been supposed that Jeroboam, in this instance, like Aaron, Micah, and Gideon, did not intend to institute idolatry, but to provide for the worship of Jehovah, in a manner different from that prescribed in the law. (See *Appendix*, note 80.) This opinion may be correct in some sense, yet scarcely so as to diminish the wickedness of the attempt. The will of God was trampled on, for the accomplishment of a political purpose. If imitations of the cherubim were taken as objects of worship, it was not because this was the divine will, but on account of this mode being more agreeable to the public taste. And whether these or any other material substances or figures were worshiped, the adoration was equally idolatry. Hence we find that, when abandoned by priests and Levites, he selected ministers for his worship from "the people at large,"* whilst he took on himself the duties of high priest. He also made such arrangements as were likely to prevent the people of Israel from attending the great religious festivals at Jerusalem. As, therefore, the feast of tabernacles was held on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, he appointed one similar to it to be held at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, when he, and the priests whom he had appointed, sacrificed to the calves, and offered upon the altar before them, and burnt incense. On this occasion God showed the wicked king and his people that, if they had forsaken him, he had not withdrawn his omniscient eye and almighty rule from them. The apostasy of ten tribes, consummated at their first idolatrous festival, was a fearful crisis in the annals of Israel; and the interposition was worthy of the emergency. The king and his retinue of priests, with the assembled multitude, stood before the altar, while Jeroboam proceeded to burn incense; when a man of God, who had come out of Judah by the word of the Lord, stood forth, and denounced a fearful malediction against this idolatrous altar. The king, enraged at the unseasonable interruption, stretched forth his hand, and commanded his people to arrest the prophet. But the power of God was there: his hand was immediately dried up; the stiffness of death had laid hold of it; while, as the man of God had foretold, the altar was rent, and the ashes poured out. Overwhelmed with this judgment, and humbled by his suffering, Jeroboam entreated the man of God to pray for him; which being

* Horsley's translation of 1 Kings xxii, 31.

done, his arm was restored. This case exhibits one of the most remarkable predictions found in connection with the history of Israel; the Scriptural narrative should be carefully perused, including the history of the old prophet by whom this man of God was afterward deceived.

The most astonishing feature of the matter, however, is, that Jeroboam still adhered to his idolatrous practice, while God in mercy varied his mode of chastisement, and gave him another warning. His eldest son, a prince of great promise, was taken dangerously ill. The afflicted king, having no access to God afforded to him by the idol-worship which he had established, advised his wife to go in disguise to the prophet Ahijah, and endeavor to learn the fate of their child. As this prophet had predicted his elevation to the throne, in him Jeroboam had the greatest confidence, although, having forsaken the worship of Jehovah, he dared not avow his name. The queen consented; and when she reached the door of Ahijah, the prophet, although blind through age, having received the word of the Lord, exclaimed, "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam: why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." 1 Kings xiv, 6. The man of God then proceeded to predict the miserable ruin of the whole house of Jeroboam, saying, that the son who was ill should die, but that this would be in mercy; he alone of all the family should come to the grave, having in his heart some reverence for Jehovah; adding, further, that the idolatry of Israel would ultimately bring ruin upon the whole land. The afflicted mother returned to her house; and, as she reached the door, her son died according to the word of the Lord.

Still, however, the infatuated king adhered to his evil policy, and continued his efforts for the enlargement of his power. During his residence in Egypt, he appears to have stood high in the favor of the king, which probably furnishes the reason why Shishak, when he invaded Judah, and laid Jerusalem under heavy contribution, does not appear to have made any aggression upon Israel. In the seventeenth year of Jeroboam, the son of Solomon, who had reigned at Jerusalem, died, and was succeeded by his son Abijah. This young prince, soon after his accession, invaded Israel with a very powerful army, and was promptly met by Jeroboam with one twice as numerous. The king of Judah, undismayed by the number of his enemies, delivered a spirited address to the men of Israel, showing with great force their defection from God, and his own trust in Jehovah. And, although Jeroboam nearly succeeded in surrounding the army of Judah, he was signally defeated. Bethel, Ephraim, and Jeshanah, with their dependent villages, were wrested from the kingdom

of Israel, and added to Judah, as the result of the first great battle between these rival states. The sacred writer attributes this victory to Divine intervention : " God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah. And the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers." 2 Chron. xiii, 15-18. Although Jeroboam survived Abijah, he died soon after this event, and was succeeded by his son Nadab.

This king appears to have inherited his father's bad qualities, without his capacity. " He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father." 1 Kings xv, 26. In the second year of his reign, he assembled his army, and laid siege to Gibbethon, a town in the tribe of Dan, which appears at this time to have been in possession of the Philistines. As this place had been occupied by Levites, it is probable, when the sacred tribe left the kingdom of Israel on account of the idolatry of Jeroboam, that the Philistines in the immediate neighborhood took possession of the abandoned city ; and the object of Nadab, in this expedition, was to dispossess them. Whilst thus occupied, he was slain by one of his soldiers, Baasha, a man of Issachar, who immediately assumed the government ; and, to make himself secure in its possession, cut off every member of the family of Jeroboam ; thus fulfilling the word of the Lord by the prophet Ahijah.

Baasha continued both the sinful policy of his predecessors, and the war with Judah. In the latter he must have been eminently successful ; for, although we are at once simply told that " Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah ;" (1 Kings xv, 17 ;) it must be evident that this could not have been done, unless Israel had repaired the consequences of the defeat suffered from Asa, and completely mastered the army of Judah in the field. The site of Ramah has been identified by Dr. Robinson (*Bib. Res.*, vol. ii, p. 315) as being about five miles north of Jerusalem, and about half way from that capital to Bethel. This latter city must therefore have been first recovered, and the king of Israel have felt confident of his superior strength, or he would not have attempted to establish a fortified post in the immediate vicinity of the capital of Judah, and thus virtually to blockade it on the north. Nor did Baasha miscalculate his power ; for the utmost efforts of Judah could not prevent the gradual progress of the threatened evil. In this extremity Asa had recourse to the fatal policy of subsidizing a foreign power to act against his Hebrew brethren. In consequence of this arrangement, the king of Syria marched an army into the north part of the kingdom of Israel, and so extensively ravaged

Manasseh and Naphtali, that Baasha was obliged to abandon his inroad on Judah, to defend his own dominions. Prior to this, the royal residence of the kings of Israel had been removed from Sichem to Tirzah, where Baasha kept his court.

But, notwithstanding the continuance of idolatry by the king and people of Israel, Jehovah still attested not only his being and providence, but also his special interest in the seed of Jacob. And as Jeroboam had been fully warned before the ruin of his family, so the new dynasty is visited in a similar manner. This divine mission is performed by Jehu the son of Hanani, who, by the word of the Lord, reminds Baasha of his humble origin, and providential elevation, and of the fearful fact, that he had, notwithstanding, persisted in the wicked way of the family, whose judicial destruction gave him his crown. This conviction of sin is followed by a suitable threatening of punishment. Baasha was informed, in terrible terms, that as he had resembled Jeroboam in iniquity, so he should be like him in punishment,—that his children and his race should miserably perish. No cheering word speaks of penitence or prayer. Baasha died, and Elah his son reigned in his stead.

We know nothing of the acts of this king. From the manner in which his death is given, it is probable that he did nothing worthy of being recorded. During a brief reign of two years, Elah followed in the wicked courses of his father; and at the end of that time, "as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, steward of his house in Tirzah, Zimri smote him, and killed him." 1 Kings xvi, 9, 10. The assassin, who was a person of some distinction, having the command of one-half of the chariots of the king of Israel, instantly attempted to step into the vacant throne; and it appears that the capital submitted to his sway. But while the usurper was occupied in destroying, not only the whole family of the late king, but also all his kinsfolk and friends, thereby fully verifying the word spoken by the prophet; the army, still encamped before Gibbethon, hearing what had taken place, appointed Omri, the captain of the host, to be king. This officer, eager to secure the high dignity which the suffrages of the army had given him, abandoned Gibbethon, and marched with his troops to the capital. Zimri had no force to meet his rival in the field, nor could he prevent Tirzah from being taken; but when he saw his hope gone, and the palace closely invested, he set fire to the royal residence, and perished in the conflagration. His brief and troubled reign of seven days, so closely followed by his miserable death, led to the formation of the spirited proverb, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" 2 Kings ix, 81.

But the death of Zimri did not give his rival quiet possession of the throne. The people, either disliking this military chief, or indisposed to submit the disposal of the crown to a military election, put forth another candidate for power in the person of Tibni, the son of Ginath. This new rival produced a civil war, which, having lasted five years, was terminated by the death of Tibni, and the establishment of Omri in the sovereignty of Israel. Yet the nation gained nothing by these murders and wars. Omri earned to himself the unenviable distinction of doing "worse than all that were before him." 1 Kings xvi, 25. He continued to enforce the policy of Jeroboam, and even surpassed him in wickedness. The royal residence at Tirzah having been destroyed, and the city greatly injured in the civil wars, Omri determined to build a new palace and seat of government. For this purpose he bought an elevated piece of ground, and proceeded to build thereon a city, which he called Samaria, from Shemer, the former proprietor of the land. This place rose rapidly into importance, and continued to be the capital of Israel until the ruin of the kingdom. (See *Appendix*, note 81.)

After having reigned twelve years, Omri died, and was succeeded by his son Ahab. It is painful to narrate the continued declension of this kingdom, forming, as it did, the larger portion of the descendants of Jacob. This king not only followed in the evil ways of his father, but went far beyond him and all his predecessors in impiety. He married Jezebel, a princess of Zidon. She possessed a mind vigorous and energetic, daring and passionate; whilst her husband was the weakest of the kings of Israel. The inevitable and almost immediate consequence of this connection was the decided preponderance of the mind of the queen in all the national councils.

Hitherto the worship of Israel did not professedly renounce Jehovah. It was wicked, because its locality and manner were in violation of the divine law; it was idolatrous, because the golden calves were approached with Divine honor; but, as we have shown, this scheme only proposed to worship Jehovah in another way; the object was professedly the same. Now, however, all reserve and limitation are removed, and Israel as a kingdom boldly descends into the deepest, darkest abyss of idolatrous infamy. The king, under the influence of Jezebel, first tolerated the introduction of Phenician idolatry, then established it as the religion of the court and kingdom, and lastly persecuted to death those who still adhered to the service of Jehovah. He built a temple at Samaria, and erected an image, and consecrated a grove to Baal. A multitude of priests and prophets were maintained, as the working agency of this impure system. On one occasion, when but a portion of this ministry is

referred to, we are told, the prophets of Baal, or the sun, were four hundred and fifty men, and the prophets of the groves, or Astarte, four hundred. So energetic and industrious were Jezebel and her agents in fostering the polytheism of Zidon, and spreading its rising power over every part of the kingdom of Israel! Hence it is said, "Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." 1 Kings xvi, 33.

Early in this reign, Hiel, the Bethelite, rebuilt Jericho, and thus exposed himself to a malediction delivered by Joshua, and which the inspired compiler of the Book of Kings assures us was strictly fulfilled. The exact accomplishment of this prediction would afford a remarkable assertion of the infinite wisdom and power of Jehovah, of the utmost consequence, amid the idolatry and impiety of the court and the people. (See *Appendix*, note 82.) But Israel was not left to infer the authority of God from this demonstration of his truth. At this season of fearful apostasy, Elijah was raised up to be a mighty witness for the truth, and a means of leading Israel back to the knowledge of Jehovah.

The first reference to this prophet which is found in the sacred narrative is abrupt, if not unintelligible. Immediately after the account of Hiel's building of Jericho it is said, "And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." 1 Kings xvii, 1. The Jewish fathers pretend to remove this abruptness, and connect this speech of Elijah with the current history, by supplying a portion of the narrative which they allege has been omitted from the present text of the sacred writer. Immediately after the account of Hiel, and the loss of his sons, as narrated above, they add, "Elijah and Ahab went to comfort Hiel in his grief, concerning his sons. And Ahab said to Elijah, Is it possible that the curse of Joshua, the son of Nun, who was only the servant of Moses, should be fulfilled, and the curse of Moses our Teacher not be fulfilled; who said, (Deut. xi, 16, 17,) 'If ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them, then the Lord's wrath shall be kindled against you; and he will shut up heaven that there be no rain?' Now, all the Israelites serve other gods, and yet the rain is not withheld. Then Elijah said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall be no rain nor dew these years, but according to my word."*

Whatever may be the value of this traditional matter, it will

* This paragraph is given by R. S. Jarchi, the Jerusalem and Babylonish Talmuda, Seder Otam, Abarbanel, &c.

scarcely be doubted that the fulfillment of Joshua's malediction was likely to call general attention to Divine prophecy; and it is far from improbable that the infidelity of that day would endeavor to meet this case with that of other prophetic declarations which had not been accomplished. It is, however, certain, that rain was suspended, according to the prayer of Elijah; and, from the state of the narrative, it seems as if this event had some connection with the case of Hiel. This continued drought was a terrible infliction. In the whole of the Divine administration toward his people, we find no other instance of suffering thus intense, lasting so long. God's controversy with Israel must have been great, to have produced such fearful judgments. Nor is the cause concealed. In no other period of their history do we find an apostasy so general, and so fully developed. Not only was the Phenician idolatry established, but at this time the worship of Jehovah was prescribed, and his faithful servants hunted to death. So violent was the persecution, that "Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord" with such unrelenting malignity, that, to save them from extermination, a pious member of the royal household concealed a hundred of them in two caves, feeding them with bread and water. Yet so zealous and persevering were the agents of the wicked queen, that this fact was discovered, and made known to the king.

The consequences of the drought were terrible. Water soon became scarce, the soil was dried up, and, as season after season passed away without the customary weeks of harvest, a frightful famine devastated every part of the country. So great were the privations occasioned by this infliction, that the distinctions of social life were considerably weakened, if not destroyed. We find the king, under the pressure of its violence, sending his godly servant Obadiah in one direction, whilst he, *by himself*, took another, in search of water, in the hope that they might save the horses and mules alive, lest they should lose all the beasts. During the time that the famine was desolating the country, God cared for his servant Elijah. He was first sent to his own land, where, by the brook Cherith, he was miraculously supplied, morning and evening, with bread and flesh, and slaked his thirst with the water of the brook. When, through the effect of the continued drought, the brook was dried up, he was sent to the house of a poor widow at Zarephath, near Zidon, where he dwelt, and was, with the woman and her son, miraculously sustained by the unfailing supply of a barrel of meal and a cruse of oil. Here, the widow's son, having died, was restored to life, in answer to the prayer of the prophet. The state of the kingdom of Israel at this period can scarcely be described. Here is a great majority of

the Hebrew people, heirs to the Abrahamic covenant, who, a century previously, stood foremost among the nations of the earth, for civilization, arts, and martial power: yet see them now, debased, demoralized, ruined! The malediction of Jehovah rests upon the people; the ungenial heavens frown upon the parched ground, and man and beast pine away, their spirit broken, their lives consumed by wasting want. But, dreadful as was the reverse in the outward and temporal circumstances of Israel, their religious declension was still worse. As far as the eye of man could discern, there was but one prophet of Jehovah throughout the length and breadth of the land; and even the Omniscient Eye could find in Israel but seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

After this fatal drought had continued more than three years, the prophet Elijah was commanded by God to present himself before Ahab, as a means of terminating this infliction. In the way he met the faithful Obadiah, whom he sent to Ahab, to apprise him of his coming. The king, hearing of the approach of the prophet, went out to meet him, and addressed Elijah with the stern inquiry, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" To which the man of God, with equal spirit, replied, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim;" adding a request that he would summon a general convocation of the people, with the prophets of Baal and the groves, to meet at Mount Carmel. 1 Kings xviii, 17-19. When this assembly was convened, Elijah addressed the people, asking them why as a nation they were divided and uncertain in opinion respecting the worship of God. "How long," said he, "halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." Verse 21. The people made no answer. Writhing under the effects of the terrible famine, they dared not openly reject Jehovah: while, in the presence of the king and his host of prophets, they could not denounce Baal: so they "answered him not a word." To determine the great question at issue, Elijah then proposed that two sacrifices should be prepared in the usual manner, but that, instead of applying fire to the offering, each party should make supplication to their God, and the God which answered by sending fire to consume the sacrifice was to be acknowledged as the Almighty Lord; and, presenting himself as the only prophet of Jehovah, he challenged the numerous prophets of Baal to test the divinity of their master by this means. The people heartily approved this proposal. It saved them from all responsibility: whilst it called for no exercise of faith on their part, it exposed them to no risk. Nor could the prophets of Baal object.

They worshiped the sun, who was regarded by them as the active principle of heat: fire was his element. The personification of their deity was even now rising high in the heavens, throwing his burning rays through a cloudless sky. To them, if they really believed the doctrines which they taught, the opportunity for exalting Baal was a most favorable one; and they appear to have entered upon their task with great alacrity. The sacred historian relates the whole case minutely, and with great effect. Having prepared the sacrifice, the multitude of priests cried in earnest prayer until noon, without receiving any answer; but although harassed by the severe sarcasms of Elijah, they continued their vain, but frantic orgies until evening. Elijah now enters upon his work. He builds an altar of twelve stones, to indicate the religious unity of the Hebrew people; prepares the sacrifice, and takes extraordinary precaution against all fraud, by making a trench round the altar, and pouring water upon the sacrifice, until it, with the wood and the altar, was completely drenched, and even the trench filled with water. He then came near, and poured out his heart in a brief, but most earnest prayer to Jehovah. This petition was immediately answered: fire fell from heaven, "and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." Verse 38. The people, astonished and alarmed at this sublime display of Divine power, threw themselves on the ground, exclaiming, in the deep feeling of a renovated faith, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." Verse 39.

The triumph of the truth was complete. The priests of Baal had utterly failed to show the existence or power of their pretended deity. Everything that the most cruel rites could effect, that the most persevering devotedness could perform, had been done; but in vain: while Jehovah at once heard, and gloriously answered, the prayer of his servant, and attested the verity of his word, and the glory of his power. Elijah then charged the people to prevent the escape of the prophets of Baal, who had been so clearly convicted of deceiving the nation: so they took them down to the brook Kishon, where, at the command of the prophet, they were all slain. It does not appear that Ahab was concerned in this transaction. Elijah appealed to the people, who, under the impression of the recent miracle, obeyed his commands; while the king was too awe-stricken to interfere. Immediately after this execution, Elijah announced to Ahab the approach of the much-desired rain; and as the king went to refresh himself for his journey, the prophet proceeded to the top of Carmel, to engage in earnest prayer: while thus employed, a cloud, about the size of a man's hand, rising out of the sea, confirmed

the promise, and shortly after the heavens were black with clouds, and there was an abundant rain.

The miracle of Carmel, although it produced temporary conviction, and confounded the supporters of idolatry, neither made all the people sensible of their wickedness, nor restored them to the love of the truth. There was, consequently, no united effort made to uphold the authority of Jehovah, and to bring the nation to worship him. But if those who had seen such a glorious display of the power of Jehovah were timid and faithless, Jezebel, incensed almost to madness by recent events, put forth tenfold energy in support of her foul idolatry. On hearing of the execution of the prophets of Baal, she fiercely swore that Elijah, by the next day, should be "as one of them." To avoid this fate, the prophet fled, first into the land of Judah, thence into the wilderness of Arabia, where, obtaining special sustenance and strength through angelic agency, he proceeded on his way, and finally reached Horeb, the mount of God. Here he received special revelations from God, relating to his own conduct, and the state of religion in the kingdom of Israel. These were required by the very depressed state of the prophet's mind. He had been zealous for the Lord of hosts, had been a messenger from Jehovah to his erring people; yet, notwithstanding the marvelous revelations of judgment and mercy, wisdom and power, which had been displayed, it was even now Elijah's firm conviction that he alone remained faithful to the Lord; and his spirit, which had braved the wrath of the king, and the opposition of an idolatrous hierarchy and nation, sunk under the impression that the cause of God was lost in Israel. The repeated exclamation, "I, even I only, am left," speaks volumes as to the ruin of his hopes. 1 Kings xix, 10-14. This impression was indeed corrected; but not in a manner calculated to afford much consolation, or to excite any high hope for the future; he was, indeed, assured that, as a worshiper of Jehovah, he was not alone in Israel. For, saith the Lord, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel." Verse 18. After the famine and the deliverance, the miracles of Carmel, and the destruction of the false prophets; after all that Jehovah had done to assert his supremacy, and to put idolatry to shame; but seven thousand out of a nation who had not bowed to Baal, and kissed him! Can we wonder that Elijah should despair?

But the prophet was commanded to proceed again toward Israel by the way of Damascus, and to anoint Hazael as future king of Syria, Jehu to succeed to the throne of Israel, and Elisha to follow himself as prophet of the Lord. All these appointments had for their object the destruction of idolatry, or the punishment of its

promoters. A short season of national prosperity appears to have followed the drought and the famine, as if Jehovah designed to try the effect of alternate chastisement and blessing on the mind of his rebellious people. This improved state of things was, however, soon terminated by an invasion of the country. Benhadad, king of Syria, (whose capital at that time was Damascus,) having formed a confederacy with thirty-two other kings, marched an immense army into the land of Israel, for the purpose of laying siege to Samaria. Secure of success in his own estimation, from the abundance of preparation, he sent to Ahab, claiming a right to all his wealth, his wives, and his children, and all that he had. The king of Israel, alarmed at his great power, consented at once to acknowledge himself a vassal of Benhadad, and to hold his crown and country, family and property, by the sufferance of the king of Syria. But the proud sovereign, not satisfied with this verbal submission, sent again to demand that his servants might search through the house of the king, and the houses of all his servants, and that they might take away whatsoever they chose of his people or his property. This demand Ahab, by advice of his council, refused. The haughty Syrian then determined on vengeance, declaring that his host was so numerous, as to be able to take up all the dust of Samaria in their hands; to which Ahab replied in terms so just and forcible, that they have become an everlasting proverb: "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." 1 Kings xx, 11.

To prove still further the effect of merciful interposition on this generally apostate people, a prophet of the Lord was sent to Ahab in this extremity, and said, "Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Even by the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall order the battle? And he answered, Thou." Verses 13, 14. The case was sufficiently urgent, and Ahab had seen enough of the manifested power of Jehovah to be obedient to this teaching. He selected the princes of the provinces, two hundred and thirty-two men, and ordered seven thousand soldiers to follow them. They went out at noon, when the Syrians were indulging in dissipation and security; and this little band attacked the host of Syria, which, thrown into disorder, fled. The army of Israel pursued them. Benhadad, himself foremost in the disgraceful flight, reached his own border, with those of his army who had escaped the great slaughter which took place during the rout.

After this deliverance, the same prophet who had foretold it, and the means by which it should be effected, came again to Ahab, and charged him to strengthen himself, for that the invasion would be repeated the following year. This, too, was verified; and Ahab, again instructed by a "man of God," not only routed his foes with a great slaughter, but took Benhadad prisoner. He, however, treated him with much kindness; and, having extorted a promise that all the cities which had been taken from Israel should be restored, he sent him away in peace. Immediately after this event, one of the sons of the prophets assured Ahab from the Lord, that, as he had allowed the king of Syria thus to escape, his life should be forfeited as a penalty, and the life of his people instead of that of the liberated Syrians. The manner in which this address was given added great weight to the sad tidings; so that the king of Israel "went to his house heavy and displeased." Verse 43. It is astonishing to find men of learning and religion speak of this threatening as if it arose out of "the spirit of the age;" when, from the whole case, it is so evident that the lenity of Ahab was not only extravagant and misplaced, but clearly indicated a favorable disposition toward idolatry in the mind of the king.

Yet all this was insufficient to produce, either in the sovereign or the people, a reverence for Jehovah, or a respect for his laws. Soon afterward we hear that Ahab much wished to purchase a vineyard, which stood close to his palace at Jezreel. But Naboth, the owner, would not consent to sell his inheritance. The proud monarch took this refusal as such an indignity, that he grieved much, and would not eat. Jezebel, however, having understood the cause of his grief, immediately promised him possession of the desired spot. Accordingly, she procured suborned witnesses, who charged Naboth with treason and blasphemy, for which he was immediately put to death. Jezebel then invited her husband to gratify his desire, seeing Naboth was dead. Ahab, who could not but be privy to the guilt of these transactions, gladly went to take possession of his prey. Here, however, he had another proof that Jehovah is the God of all the earth. Whilst intent upon his new acquisition, the eyes of Elijah rested upon him; his voice of thunder sank into his heart, while he said, "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine;" adding, to complete the denunciation, "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel." 1 Kings xxi, 19, 23. These terrible predictions greatly troubled Ahab. He had, on many previous occasions, seen the word of the Lord abundantly verified; and he now trembled at the prospect of having immediately to endure

the punishment which he so richly merited. These alarming apprehensions seem to have led him to some measure of godly repentance. He humbled himself, "rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly." Verse 27. Because of these manifestations of humility, the infliction of the evil was graciously deferred.

Notwithstanding the extravagant kindness which Ahab had showed to Benhadad, the Syrian king, when safely returned to his own country, refused to comply with the conditions which he had so solemnly promised to perform. The towns previously taken from Israel by the Syrians were not restored. This produced a renewal of hostilities, which continued three years.

In the third year of this war, Jehoshaphat king of Judah came down to Samaria to visit the king of Israel. The asperity formerly existing between the two kingdoms appears by this time to have passed away, and a good understanding and feeling to have been produced. During this visit, Ahab pointed out to Jehoshaphat the unjust retention of Ramoth-gilead by the king of Syria, and solicited his aid in recovering it. Jehoshaphat at once agreed to join him, but proposed inquiring of the Lord respecting the enterprise. Ahab called together his prophets, four hundred in number, who all predicted a favorable issue to the undertaking. But Jehoshaphat was not satisfied; inquiring, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil."* 1 Kings xxii, 7, 8. At the request of the king of Judah, however, he was sent for; and he predicted a most disastrous issue of the expedition. Many conflicting opinions have been formed of this singular history. It appears, however, very probable, that the four hundred prophets were the idolatrous ministers of Ahab, now presented as pretended prophets of the Lord, but engaged to carry out the king's views. This may be gathered from the fact, that Micaiah calls them Ahab's prophets, (verse 23;) and the messengers sent to call Micaiah charged him to speak *that which was good*, (verse 18;) that is, which was agreeable to the royal ear. The true character of these prophets is further indicated by the parable in which Micaiah describes them to be actuated by a lying spirit.

The most remarkable part of the case is, that, after this warning, the pious king of Judah should still consent to take a part in the enterprise. This may, however, be in some measure accounted for,

* How similar is the case described in the Iliad, book i, line 1061

by an intermarriage which had taken place between the families; Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, having married Athaliah, daughter of Ahab. The expedition was accordingly undertaken and defeated. Ahab having been killed in the conflict, the blood was washed from his chariot in the pool of Samaria, where the dogs licked it up, as predicted by Elijah. Ahaziah succeeded to the throne of his father Ahab. This sovereign, while he continued to support the idolatry of Jezebel, with a wicked zeal worthy of his parentage, also continued to cultivate friendly relations with Judah. In conjunction with Jehoshaphat, he projected the restoration of the maritime traffic to Ophir, which had been found so lucrative in the days of Solomon. A prophet of Jehovah, however, denounced this wicked alliance to the king of Judah, and predicted the failure of the scheme. This prediction was fulfilled: for, although the confederate kings made great efforts to equip a navy, the vessels never proceeded on the voyage, but were wrecked before they cleared out of the port. 2 Chron. xx, 35-37.

Ahaziah did not long survive this fruitless attempt. He fell through a lattice from an upper chamber of his palace, in Samaria, and was greatly injured by the fall. In this extremity, he sent to inquire of the oracle of Beelzebub, the god of Ekron, whether he should recover. But, at the word of the Lord, Elijah interposed himself before the messenger in his way; and, having boldly reproofed the king for seeking information from a Heathen temple, he declared that he should surely die; a threatening which was shortly after accomplished; and Jehoram, his brother, reigned in his stead.

Soon after the accession of this prince, we find him, in conjunction with the kings of Judah and Edom, engaged in an expedition against the Moabites. In this war, it appears that Elisha first actually entered upon the prophetic office. Elijah had been gloriously translated to heaven; and the son of Shaphat, according to his earnest desire, had caught his mantle and his spirit. He accompanied this expedition; and when, by great mismanagement, the confederate army was on the point of perishing for want of water, he procured them a miraculous supply, which was also the means of their obtaining a complete victory over the Moabites.

The fame of Elisha as a prophet and worker of miracles grew rapidly. He healed the waters at Jericho, when found of very deleterious quality; multiplied the distressed widow's oil; restored to life the child of the Shunammite; destroyed the poisonous quality of certain noxious herbs; and fed a hundred men on twenty loaves. Such miraculous powers soon spread his fame to all surrounding countries. The king of Syria, hearing of it, sent his favorite gene-

ral, Naaman, to the king of Israel, that he might be healed of his leprosy; and, notwithstanding the dismay with which this strange application inspired the king of Israel, Elisha complied with the request, and sent the leper back perfectly healed.

Nor was the power of the prophet confined to these private cases. The king of Israel having commenced or renewed the war with Syria, Elisha unveiled all the movements of the enemy, so that the counsels of Benhadad were as well known in the palace of Samaria as in that of Syria. Enraged at having his plans thus exposed, and being well aware of the agency by which it was done, the Syrian king determined to destroy the prophet; and for this purpose sent a body of troops to invest Dothan, where he then was. This was done so effectually, that all merely human hope of escape was cut off. But, in answer to the prayer of Elisha, in the morning his servant saw the mountain covered with "horses and chariots of fire." 2 Kings vi, 17. Then Elisha smote the Syrians with blindness, and led them into the midst of Samaria, where they were restored to sight. After showing them that they were completely at the mercy of Israel, he gave them refreshment, and sent them away.

Finding all other measures unavailing, Benhadad assembled an immense army, and laid siege to Samaria. The king of Israel dared not to meet him in the field; and the defenses of the capital were so strong, that the city could not be taken by assault. But no sufficient magazine of provisions, independent of the surrounding country, had been provided. Famine, therefore, soon became more terrible than the sword. The sacred narrative gives a fearfully vivid picture of the sufferings endured by the inhabitants of the city during this siege. An ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, about £2. 9s. What, then, must have been the value of the whole of the animal! How does the enormous price of this most loathsome flesh prove the intensity of public want! Again: the fourth part of a cab of doves' dung was sold for five pieces of silver. The reader will scarcely require to be informed that the term which our translators have rendered "doves' dung," is, by the best biblical critics, supposed to mean a kind of pulse, a half pint of which was worth about three shillings. But these proofs of scarcity sink into insignificance, when we read of the horrible appeal made to the king, as, passing upon the wall, he surveyed the power of the enemy without, and the sufferings of his people within, the city. "There cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto

her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him : and she hath hid her son." Verses 26, 28, 29. The already afflicted monarch was overwhelmed with grief at this shocking recital : he rent his clothes, and thus showed that he had sackcloth on his flesh. This climax of agony led the king to a determination, which will appear, at the present time, most extravagant and unreasonable. His declared resolve was, to take off the head of Elisha that very day. It has from hence been generally supposed, that the king attributed these evils to the influence of the prophet. But this is far from being evident. It is much more likely that he thought the prophet had sufficient power with God to procure some deliverance, or alleviation of the misery, but that he would not.

Elisha was, by Divine inspiration, made aware of the danger ; and when the messenger of death arrived at the door of the house where he was, he found means to detain him there until the king, who followed him, also arrived. Elisha then declared, by the word of the Lord, that that day should terminate these terrible sufferings ; that on the morrow provision should be so abundant, that a *seah* (about two gallons and a half) of fine flour should be sold for a shekel, (about two shillings and four-pence,) and two *seahs* of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. 2 Kings vii, 1. This intelligence seemed so incredible, that the officer who accompanied the king intimated his opinion that it could not be, unless the Lord would make windows in heaven, and rain flour from thence. The prophet iterated the prediction ; adding that, although this man should see it, he should not eat of it.

On that day the Lord so affrighted the Syrians with supernatural noises, resembling those made by the rapid march of a great army, and filled them with such unaccountable consternation, that they with one consent abandoned their camp, and fled. Being fully persuaded that a host of Hittites or Egyptians had been procured to aid Israel, they did not stay to strike their tents, or even to take their property or provision ; but fled in the greatest haste, until they had crossed the Jordan. Still the famished inhabitants of the city saw no signs of relief ; until four lepers, who were shut without the gate, and nearly perishing with hunger, determined, in the twilight of the evening, to venture into the Syrian camp, which they found entirely abandoned by the army, but replete with provisions and articles of luxury. Having amply provided for themselves, they conveyed the intelligence to the porter at the gate of the city, and he to the king. Jehoram arose in the night, and, as was very natural, supposed that the abandonment of the camp was a stratagem to draw out the inhabitants of the town that they might be destroyed. A few horsemen were

therefore sent to reconnoitre; and their testimony established the joyful fact, that the siege was raised, and the whole Syrian camp, with its furniture and provision, abandoned. The people, therefore, at once sallied out, and spoiled the camp; and the abundance of provisions was so great, that the prediction of Elisha, as to its price, was verified; as it was also in respect of the incredulous officer; for he being appointed to arrange the business at the gate of the city, the crowd was so great that he was trodden to death.

Soon after this unexpected deliverance, Benhadad, the king of Syria, fell sick. Josephus intimates that his distemper was occasioned by the melancholy conviction, that his attempt on Samaria had been frustrated, not by the power of man, or any accidental circumstance, but by the interposition of Heaven. It is, however, a singular and unexplained circumstance, that about this time we find Elisha at Damascus. No sooner had intelligence of his arrival reached the ears of the king, than he sent the prophet, by the hand of his principal officer, Hazael, a magnificent present "of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden." This was presented to Elisha, with the very respectful inquiry, "Thy son Benhadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?" 2 Kings viii, 9. The prophet answered in terms of enigmatical import: "Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord hath showed me that he shall surely die." Then, looking steadfastly and long in the face of the messenger, "the man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword." Verses 10-12. Hazael expressed much surprise at this announcement, apparently incredulous as to his means of effecting such great objects; but the prophet silenced every doubt, by the assurance that the whole case was under his eye: "The Lord has shown me thee ruling over Syria." (See *Appendix*, note 83.)

In due time this prediction was fulfilled. Hazael returned to his master with a favorable report; but, on the next day, "he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died." Verse 15. The murderer seems to have had no difficulty in stepping into the vacant throne. Nor was he unequal to the station which he had so wickedly obtained.

Jehoram king of Israel seized this opportunity of endeavoring to recover possession of Ramoth-gilead, in a fruitless attempt on which his father Ahab was slain. In this effort, as in the former one, the king of Judah joined his forces to those of Israel. In a battle fought

in this war, Jehoram was wounded, and obliged to return to Jezreel; and soon after the king of Israel went down to see him. While these events were transpiring, or immediately afterward, Ramoth-gilead was taken, and the army held possession, probably expecting a counter attack from the forces of Syria. At this juncture one of the sons of the prophets, sent by Elisha, appeared before Jehu, who had been left in command of the army, as he sat with the other officers; and, having called him into a private place, anointed him king over Israel; at the same time charging him by the word of the Lord to cut off the whole house of Ahab.

The soldiers were no sooner informed of this appointment, than they immediately confirmed it. Jehu was at once saluted as king. The trumpets sounded, and public proclamation to that effect was at once made. The sovereign elect well knew that his safety and success depended upon the promptitude and energy of his conduct: he therefore proceeded with a select body of troops by rapid marches to Jezreel. The kings of Israel and Judah, while congratulating themselves on their success against the arms of Syria, and enjoying repose in the favorite city of Jezebel, were surprised by being informed that a party of armed men were rapidly approaching the city. In a short time they were further told that Jehu was at their head. Jehoram, impatient to know the cause of this movement, mounted his chariot, and, in company with the king of Judah, went out to meet him. He was not left long in doubt. The furious aspirant to the crown reproached the king with the wickedness of his house, and then shot him dead with an arrow. The king of Israel shared the same fate. Jehu, commanding that the body of Jehoram should be cast into the piece of ground which had been so unrighteously taken from Naboth, hastened into the city. Here Jezebel, whose violent spirit could not be restrained, disguised her face and head, and, looking through a window, saluted Jehu with the appropriate inquiry, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" 2 Kings ix, 31. But her hour was come: at the command of Jehu, she was thrown out at the window, and trampled to death under the feet of the horses.

Having secured himself in the possession of Jezreel, Jehu sent his servants to seek and bury Jezebel, out of respect to her royal rank; but the malediction of Heaven had been already fulfilled: the dogs had eaten her, according to the word of the Lord. Jehu then sent a letter to those who had the charge of the princes of the house of Ahab, and to the rulers of Samaria,—seventy sons of Ahab being in that city,—calling upon them to select the best of the princes, to set him on the throne, and to prepare to fight in his support. These persons, however, shrank from the dangerous task; they saw the

caustic irony of the request, and replied by placing themselves under the orders of Jehu. His terms were, "If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time." 2 Kings x, 6. This was complied with, and the next morning saw the seventy heads disposed in two heaps by the gate of Jezreel. Nor did this satisfy the vengeance of the son of Nimshi: he "slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining." Verse 11.

Having accomplished his purpose in Jezreel, Jehu went up to Samaria. By the way, he had further opportunity of indulging his sanguinary spirit; for, before he reached the capital, he met forty-two persons, relatives of the king of Judah, who, ignorant of what had taken place, were going down to visit the royal family at Jezreel. All these he immediately put to death. In this journey, also, he met with Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, whom he took up into his chariot, and invited him to "come and see" his "zeal for the Lord." Verses 15, 16. This person is generally supposed to have been the founder of the Rechabites, spoken of by Jeremiah. He was not an Israelite, but a Kenite; yet, as a worshiper of Jehovah, and a determined enemy to idolatry, he might feel a great interest in the reformation which Jehu was professing to effect; while, on the other hand, being a person of acknowledged religious character, his presence in the chariot might tend to facilitate the objects of the king.

On arriving at Samaria, Jehu called a solemn assembly of all those who were attached to the idolatry of Sidon. He even went so far as to make large professions of reverence for Baal; protesting that even Ahab served Baal *little* in comparison with what he would do. Under the influence of these professions and invitations, all the worshipers of Baal, came together. Having taken great pains to get every one who revered Baal and none else, into this assembly, he had them all destroyed. He also burned all the images of Baal, and brake the temple, and rooted his worship out of Israel.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, "Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart." Verse 31. He neither departed from the sin of Jeroboam, nor gave up the worship of the calves at Bethel and Dan.

But although special Divine interposition was thus manifested in the elevation of the son of Nimshi to the crown, he did not consecrate himself to the service of Jehovah. His obedience was merely political, for selfish purposes, and therefore not acceptable to God. When the Divine requirement stood in opposition to his notions of

policy, he disobeyed. This conduct produced the usual results of national disaster and defeat. Hazael king of Syria attacked the borders of Israel with great success. He appears to have subdued all the transjordanic territories, making that river the eastern frontier of Israel.

As Jehu did not faithfully restore the worship of Jehovah, the Lord would not permanently establish his family on the throne of Israel; but, as he so fully executed the Divine will in the extirpation of the wicked family of Ahab, and in the destruction of the idolatry of Baal, it was declared that his children to the fourth generation should continue on the throne.

Some writers place the mission of Jonah in the reign of Jehu. He was called from the kingdom of Israel, and sent to the king of Assyria, and the people of his capital, to command them to repent. At no time was the word of a prophet of Israel likely to have greater effect. The predictions and miracles of Elijah and Elisha must have been known, not only in the countries bordering on Judea, but in distant lands. At Damascus we have seen that the latter prophet was received as the messenger of God. When these facts are considered, it is not a matter of so much surprise, when a prophet of Israel stood and publicly predicted the ruin of Nineveh within three days, that it should have produced the humiliation and penitence which at that time averted the threatened doom.

An incident in the life of this prophet also reminds us of an interesting and important fact. He "went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish." Jonah i, 8. So, then, amid the rapid fluctuations and severe reverses to which the idolatries of Israel had subjected this section of the sons of Jacob, the Phenician merchants of Tyre, steady to their purpose, pursued their commercial intercourse with the west. It is worthy of remark, that it was in a vessel sailing to Spain, and, in all probability, to Britain, that the disobedient prophet endeavored in vain to escape.

At the death of Jehu, his son Jehoahaz succeeded to the throne of Israel. We know but little of his disastrous reign, except that the monarch still upheld the worship established by Jeroboam, and was grievously oppressed by Hazael king of Syria. "For the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing." 2 Kings xiii, 7. So ruinous to the strength of the kingdom were these aggressions, that the king of Israel had only "fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen," left. This oppression, however, led to prayer: "Jehoahaz besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened unto him." Verse 4. It is also said that "the Lord gave Israel a saviour." Verse 5. If this applies to any deliverance

wrought out in the time of this king, we have no information respecting it; most probably, however, it predicted one in the following reign.

Jehoahaz was succeeded by his son Joash, who, although he departed not from the wickedness of the son of Nebat, yet, having heard that the aged prophet Elisha was sick, went down to see him; and, regarding the venerable man as the strength of Israel, "wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." Verse 14. Elisha commanded the king to take a bow and arrows, and putting his hands on the king's hands, told him to shoot out at the window eastward: upon which the prophet said, that was the arrow of the Lord's deliverance from Syria. The king was then desired to take his arrows, and smite the ground. He did so "thrice, and stayed." The prophet was wroth that he had smitten but thrice; saying, "Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice." Verse 18, 19. By these symbolical actions did the dying prophet predict the deliverance of Israel from the wretched subjection to which it had been reduced, and censure the lack of zeal and energy which the king displayed.

No prince had assumed the government of Israel under more adverse circumstances than Joash. But the death of Hazael, soon after, greatly improved the aspect of affairs. This Syrian king had been a scourge of the ten tribes, beyond any who had preceded him. His name was the terror of the land. And, although his son and successor, Benhadad, was not less hostile in his disposition, he lacked the talents and energy of his father. In the war which ensued, Joash recovered the cities which Hazael had taken from Israel, and obtained, according to the word of the prophet, three signal victories over the Syrian armies.

During this reign there occurred one of those unnatural and suicidal wars which more than once wasted the resources, and sacrificed the lives, of the children of Jacob. Amaziah, king of Judah, having obtained a great victory over the Edomites, was so elated, that he persisted in provoking the king of Israel to war. The hostile Hebrews met at Beth-shemesh, where the arms of Israel were completely triumphant. The king of Judah was taken prisoner, and the victorious monarch marched to Jerusalem, broke down a great portion of the wall of the city, took all the gold and silver and costly vessels which were in the house of the Lord; and, with this spoil and hostages, he returned in triumph to Samaria. Joash had the satisfaction of knowing that, during his reign, the position of his

kingdom had been retrieved. He had driven out the enemies who trampled upon the power and independence of the country, recovered the towns which had been previously occupied by the Syrians, and left Israel respectable and respected. He was succeeded by his son, Jeroboam II.

This sovereign seems to have inherited the talents and energy, as well as the crown, of his father. He conducted the war against Syria with great success, and succeeded in recovering, to the dominion of Israel, all the district to the east of Jordan, which was regarded by Joshua as pertaining to the Land of Promise. The eastern frontier of Israel was thus extended from Hamath to the Dead Sea. He even succeeded in obtaining military possession of the capital of Syria; and it is worthy of notice that these successes had been predicted by the prophet Jonah.

It does not appear difficult to account, in some measure, for this sudden flow of political power and prosperity to Israel. Just before this time, Assyria appears to have turned her military attention on western Asia. Syria and other kingdoms, which had hitherto been the hereditary enemies of Israel and Judah, were the first to feel this aggression. Harassed by Assyria on the east, and the Israelites on the west, these powers fell one after another. During their gradual fall, Israel appeared to rise into power with sudden and unexpected rapidity. But this prosperity was ephemeral in its duration. These intermediate powers having been vanquished, they no longer sufficed to ward off Assyrian aggression. The Israelites were, therefore, exposed to more powerful foes than they had ever previously encountered. Nor was there any manifestation of religious character which warranted the hope of supernatural deliverance. The whole history of the kingdom of Israel is a record of the unwillingness of men to acknowledge the interpositions of God, and their resistance against the evidence of Divine goodness. Yet, at this time, after all their sufferings and sorrows, they still adhered to the calves of Bethel and Dan; and Jeroboam II., though in other respects an able sovereign, in this "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." 2 Kings xiv, 24.

But as the great crisis in the history of this people was rapidly approaching, so the communications of Heaven by inspired prophets were not only continued, but written and preserved, to be a perpetual monument of the gracious care which Jehovah manifested toward his people.

During the reign of Jeroboam II., two of these messengers of Jehovah were commissioned to the people of Israel. Hosea is believed to have been the first, in order of time. The general scope

of his predictions is supposed to have been designed, 1. To make the Jewish nation in general, and the people of Israel in particular, sensible of the guilt of their many heinous sins, and especially of their abominable idolatry. In connection with this object, the prophet alludes to the very corrupt state of the kingdom. 2. To foretell the utter rejection, complete ruin, and final captivity and destruction, of the Israelites, by the Assyrians, if they persisted in their course of wickedness. In recording these predictions, the prophet exhibits the vanity of their trust in Egypt, and declares that this power shall not save them. 3. To invite them to repentance by offers of mercy. In doing this, he intersperses rich evangelical predictions, and shows the happiness and glory which they might obtain, by being faithful to the law and the promises of God.

The writings of this prophet, although evidently but fragments of what were delivered by him, in a long course of public ministration, cast very important light on the purpose of God respecting his people, if they had been faithful to their calling. In the glowing descriptions and profound prophecies of Hosea, we see how Israel might yet have risen above the power of all her enemies; we see an almighty Arm ready to save; we see, moreover, a glimpse of that enlarged range of spiritual vision, moral elevation, and holy privilege, which would have prepared them for the hearty reception of the gospel of the Son of God.

Amos followed in the same course. We know not the native place of this messenger of Jehovah; but he tells us that he was not trained in the schools of the prophets, but that he was a herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit, and that the Lord took him by an extraordinary call, and said, "Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos vii, 14, 15. In the course of his ministry he proclaimed the word of God at Bethel, by delivering what is now the beginning of the seventh chapter of the book which bears his name. He had not spoken many sentences, when he was interrupted by Amaziah, the priest of the idolatrous worship there, who sent to the king a flagrant misrepresentation of the prophet's discourse, falsely accusing him of a design on the king's life, and assuring Jeroboam that his preaching was dangerous to the peace of the country: "The land is not able to bear all his words." Verse 10. How many times since has the proclamation of God's truth been subjected to the same charge!

Having forwarded his accusation against the prophet to the king, this lying priest proceeds to advise the man of God to desist from his ministry, at least in that place,—the king's chapel, and the king's court,—and to retire into the land of Judah, and prophesy there.

In reply to this insidious counsel, Amos declares his call to the office by Jehovah, and arraigns Amaziah of the crime of suppressing the Divine message. He then denounces the most fearful ruin on the family of the priest, and adds, what he had not previously communicated, "Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land." Verse 17.

The prophet retired to Tekoa, in the land of Judah, and there completed the publication of the truth with which he was charged. To apprehend the scope of his prophecy, it is necessary to remember the terrible privations which the Israelites had endured on account of their sins, the temporary plenty and elevation which they now enjoyed; and that, instead of being humble, and thankful, and obedient, in return for the great goodness of God, they had become more wicked, proud, licentious, and violent, and more than ever estranged from God.

In these circumstances the prophet 1. Denounces fearful judgments against the neighboring Gentile nations, as if to impress the mind of his people with the great fact, that these kingdoms were not to them really objects of fear or hope; that their safety or ruin would proceed from God alone. 2. He reveals the punishment of Judah and Israel. In respect of the latter country, he delivers four separate discourses; namely, chap. ii, 6-16; chap. iii; chap. iv; and a general lamentation over the house of Israel, with an exhortation to repentance. In this he declares their captivity certain, if they persist in their sin; and shows the nearness and severity of the coming judgment.

Having raised his country to temporal prosperity, and at the same time resisted all this gracious warning, Jeroboam died. We have no precise account of the administration of affairs for some time after his death; for it was many years before his son Zechariah obtained royal power, and then he was murdered, after a brief reign of six months. His murderer was not more successful; for Shallum, although he stepped into the vacant throne, lost it and his life at the end of thirty days. Menahem, who appears to have been one of Zechariah's generals, marched against the usurper, and defeated and slew him. He then marched to Tirzah, formerly a royal city, which, not submitting to him, he destroyed, exercising barbarities too horrible to record.

It is observable that in this rapid succession of kings, however they might differ in other respects, they all agreed in this,—they did evil in the sight of the Lord. The nearer the judgment, the more dead they seemed to a sense of duty, the more determined to dare the wrath of Jehovah. During this reign the army of Assyria

made the first direct aggression upon Israel. The king of Nineveh came against the land; and Menahem, acknowledging himself his servant, submitted to give him what he should demand; and he exacted from Israel a thousand talents of silver. This requirement obliged Menahem to levy a tax on all the men of wealth, fifty shekels of silver to each man. By this great sacrifice a temporary peace was purchased.

At the death of Menahem, his son Pekahiah succeeded him. His only memorial is, also, "that he did evil." Two years afterward he was slain and succeeded by Pekah the son of Remaliah, one of his captains. This was an able, energetic, but very wicked prince. He formed an alliance with Syria, against Judah; but their united efforts were fruitless during the reign of the pious Jotham. After his death, however, when his unworthy son Ahaz sat upon the throne, the confederacy was renewed; the advance of the united army threatened ruin to all the power of the kingdom. The danger was the more imminent, as the object of the attack was neither more nor less than the entire subversion of the house of David, and the establishment of another dynasty upon the throne of Judah. Although Ahaz was unworthy, in an eminent degree, of Divine interposition; yet, as this object was opposed to the declared will of Jehovah, it was signally frustrated. This is the more remarkable, because, before this time, the king of Syria had taken Elath, the port on the Red Sea belonging to Judah, had also defeated their army, and carried away great numbers of the people into captivity to Damascus. Pekah had also defeated Ahaz in a great battle, in which one hundred and twenty thousand men of Judah were slain, and had taken captive two hundred thousand women, with sons and daughters, and much spoil, and returned to Samaria. But there was then in that city a prophet of the Lord, whose name was Oded. He went out to meet the victors and their captives; and he remonstrated in such a powerful strain of eloquence on the cruelty and iniquity of retaining these captives, that many of the great men of the land joined with him, and said the captives should not be received into the city. The idea of retaining them was consequently abandoned; and, after having been fed and clothed, they were with the spoil kindly sent back to their own land.

The kings of Syria and Israel, having so severely humbled Judah, persevered in their design of subverting the house of David, and of setting another king on the throne of Judah; namely, the son of Tabeal. Yet, although each was separately able to vanquish Ahaz, their united strength could not accomplish that object. It was on this occasion that Isaiah was sent to the king, to predict the utter

failure of the attempt, and the speedy ruin of the conspiring parties; at the same time offering a sign, as a certain pledge of the accomplishment of these predictions. Isa. vii.

At the request of Ahaz king of Judah, the king of Assyria assaulted and took Damascus, killing Rezin the king, and at the same time, according to Josephus, he "made an expedition against the Israelites, and had overrun all the land of Gilead, and the region beyond Jordan, and the adjoining country, which is called Galilee, and Kadesh, and Hazor; he made the inhabitants prisoners, and transplanted them into his own kingdom."—*Antiquities*, b. ix, ch. ii, sec. 1.

After these events, Hoshea, the son of Elah, conspired against Pekah, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. In the mean time, Shalmaneser had succeeded to the throne of Assyria. He very soon turned his attention to the state of things in western Asia. In his first expedition, Hoshea, fearing his great power, submitted to him, and was recognized as a tributary king. But, after some years, feeling anxious to throw off this yoke, he endeavored to form an alliance with the king of Egypt.

At this period these two great and ancient nations, the one in the east, and the other in the west, were the only really independent powers who exercised an influence on the countries between the Nile and the Euphrates. The minor states of Syria and Palestine, therefore, when oppressed by one, naturally turned for succor to the other. Of course, these remarks only apply to the seed of Jacob as unfaithful to the covenant of Jehovah. While they obeyed God, he was their strength. When they forsook him, they were driven to rely on the usual policy of nations. Hoshea did so. But his correspondence with Egypt was known at Nineveh; and the Assyrian monarch, to punish his unfaithful conduct, marched again into Palestine. The case against the king of Israel was clear; for, confiding in the protection of Egypt, he had not sent the usual and promised tribute to Assyria.

Against this reliance on Egypt, the prophets with one accord lifted up their voices. But their unanimous protest was disregarded; and now Israel felt it. The army of Assyria was overwhelming; no help from Egypt appeared: Hoshea was dethroned, and the greater part of the inhabitants of the land were carried away into captivity, and distributed in different cities and districts of Assyria; and the king of that country sent great numbers of his own people to occupy the cities of Israel.

Thus ended the kingdom of the ten tribes. God had, throughout their whole course, marvelously interposed in their behalf, whilst

they had as strenuously and perseveringly sinned against him. Having, therefore, proved to them, and through them to the whole world, what his gracious purpose was, and how fully his power was equal to the task, he punished their continued idolatry with the ruin which it had merited, and sent them into a captivity as hopeless as it was deserved.

We have deferred some remarks on the chronology of this kingdom, and some general observations on its religion, to the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HISTORY AND RELIGION OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.

REHOBAM, preparing to subdue the revolted Tribes, is forbidden by a prophet—Relative Position of the Kingdoms—Judah degenerates into Idolatry—Invaded, and Jerusalem plundered, by Shishak—Abijam succeeds to the Throne—He invades Israel—Asa made King—Prohibits Idolatry—Repels the Ethiopian Invasion—Is harassed by the King of Israel—Obtains Deliverance by a League with Syria—This Conduct condemned—The Prophet persecuted—**JEHOSHAPHAT** REIGNS—He prohibits Idolatry—And issues a Commission for the Instruction of the People—Marries his Son to the Daughter of Ahab—Judah invaded by Moab and Ammon—Jehoshaphat seeks Refuge in Jehovah—Is gloriously delivered—He attempts the Revival of the Trade with Ophir, but fails—Jehoram succeeds his Father—He massacres all his Brethren—**HE RESTORES THE GROVES AND HIGH PLACES**—Introduces the Sidonian Idolatry, and enforces its Observance—Invasion of the Kingdom by a combined Army of Philistines and Arabians—Who carry off the royal Family, and spoil the Palace of the King—Jehoram dies miserably, and is succeeded by Ahaziah—He begins to reign wickedly, and is slain by Jehu—Athaliah usurps the Government—Destroys all the Seed Royal except one Child—And reigns six Years—Athaliah slain—And Joash placed on the Throne when seven Years old—He repairs the Temple—And reigns wisely until the Death of Jehoiada—He then falls into Idolatry—Being reproved by Zechariah for his Impiety, he commands the Prophet to be put to Death—Jerusalem spoiled by Hazael of Syria—Joash is murdered in his Bed, and succeeded by Amaziah—He begins to reign well—Invades Edom—Is victorious—Worships the Deities of Seir—Is rebuked by a Prophet—Whom he threatens—He provokes a War with Israel—Is defeated, and taken Prisoner—Uzziah succeeds to the Throne—He reigns well—Humbles the Philistines, Ammonites, and Arabians—Strengthens the Army—Invents important military Engines—**HE INVADERS THE PRIEST'S OFFICE**, and, attempting to offer Incense, is smitten with Leprosy—The Nature and Influence of the prophetic Office—Jotham reigns piously—Micah prophesies—Ahaz reigns wickedly—Judah defeated by Israel with great Loss—Isaiah divinely commissioned to Ahaz—The King trusts in Assyria, and is disappointed—Hezekiah reigns—He reforms Abuses—Destroys Idolatry—And restores the Worship of Jehovah—Ceases to pay Tribute to the King of Assyria—Is threatened by him—Hezekiah's Sickness and Recovery—The Destruction of the Assyrian Army—Nahum prophesies—Conduct of the King to the Babylonish Ambassadors condemned—He is threatened—Manasseh succeeds to the Throne—He restores Idolatry—And persecutes unto Death the Worshipers of Jehovah—Subdued by the King of Assyria, and carried away Captive—He humbles himself, repents, is restored to his Kingdom, and reigns piously—He dies, and is succeeded by Amon—Judah invaded by Assyria—Delivered by Judith—Josiah reigns well—A Book of the Law found in the Temple—Josiah opposes the King of Egypt—Is slain—Jeremiah raised up to prophesy—Jehoaiah reigns wickedly—Is deposed by the King of Egypt, who places Jehoiakim on the Throne—He also reigns wickedly, and is succeeded by Jehoiachin, who is deposed by Nebuchadnezzar, who appoints Zedekiah King—He also does Evil—He is finally deposed, and Jerusalem destroyed.—Chronological Table.

REHOBAM can scarcely be said to have reigned over the whole Hebrew nation ; for no sooner had he begun to exercise sovereign power than the revolt of the ten tribes ensued ; and he found his dominion limited to Judah and Benjamin. (See *Appendix*, note 84.) Whatever may be thought of the conduct and policy of Rehoboam prior

to the revolt, he certainly acted afterward with great energy and decision. When the men of Israel had consummated their treason, by stoning his collector of taxes, and declaring themselves independent, he determined to reduce them to obedience by force. For this purpose he speedily assembled an army of one hundred and eighty thousand chosen troops: nor is it easy to conceive how the refractory tribes, in their unprepared state, could have resisted such an organized and numerous force. But the intended aggression was forbidden: "The word of God came unto Shemaiah, the man of God," commanding him to speak to the king and people of Judah and Benjamin, saying, "Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: for this thing is from me." 1 Kings xii, 22-24. The instant obedience of the king and people to this mandate shows, in a remarkable manner, that, notwithstanding the idolatry and irreligion which had prevailed, the leading principle of the theocracy was still recognized in Judah as supreme authority.

This fact directs attention to a consideration of great interest and importance. When the Hebrew people are regarded as divided into these two separate and independent states, however much they might be alike in many respects, in others they are seen in strong contrast. Judah retained the divinely appointed centre of Hebrew worship, the altar of sacrifice, and the resting-place of the Divine Glory. Here, also, was the throne of the seed of David, from whom, according to the flesh, the promised Messiah was to proceed. This kingdom, therefore, stood forth, in a peculiar and prominent manner, as heir of the covenant promise, and the germinant body upon which the hope of the world, in the great scheme of redemption, rested. The religious defection of Jeroboam, and the zeal with which he carried out his schismatic and idolatrous practices, did much to strengthen this contrast between the rival states, and to invest Judah with many direct and collateral advantages. One of these is noticed by the inspired writer, in the brief scriptural narrative of these events. We are told that the priests and Levites resorted to Rehoboam; literally, *presented* themselves unto him. They forsook their habitations, and identified themselves with the house and worship of Jehovah. And, besides these, who might be supposed to act under the bias of family or professional partiality, many others, who had set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. These immigrations contributed greatly to the improvement and stability of Rehoboam's power. These persons, by their number, wealth, and, more especially, by their sterling religion, materially improved the kingdom of Judah: the sacred writer empha-

tically says, they "made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong." 2 Chron. xi, 17.

Although warlike operations to some extent were carried on between the two states, Judah remained in security and prosperity three years, until the people, in the enjoyment of continued blessing, forgot God, and fearfully violated his laws. The sacred writer speaks of this iniquity under three distinct heads. 1 Kings xiv, 22-24. "Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done." Verse 22. This fearful charge does not appear to refer to any religious or political arrangements introduced by Rehoboam:—*Judah did evil*: the transgression was national: high and low alike participated. The people were wicked, abandoned to earthly-mindedness and sinful pursuits; and this to an extent unknown before.

But the people of Judah not only departed from the law of Jehovah; they rejected him: they sinned in their worship; they sank into idolatry. "For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree." Verse 23. It has been shown (Patriarchal Age, ch. ii, *passim*) that the earliest worship after the fall was offered "at the east of the garden of Eden" before the cherubim. Gen. iii, 24. This being always regarded as an elevated spot, men in subsequent ages, imitating the primitive mode as closely as possible, worshiped on hills, in groves, and under the shade of trees. This course was generally followed by the patriarchs. But this manner of worship, which at first was innocent and instructive, became, in process of time, corrupted by foolish admixtures, and at length was associated with the adoration of idols, and not unfrequently with cruel and obscene rites. It was, therefore, positively forbidden by the Mosaic law. Deut. xvi, 21. And, to mark in the strongest terms the displeasure of God against every thing of this kind, the Hebrews were commanded to destroy all the groves and high places of the Canaanitish nations. Exod. xxxiv, 13; Deut. vii, 5; xii, 2, 3. In open defiance of all these laws, Judah at this period revived and multiplied these forbidden sacred places. This was done, not to use them in a simple patriarchal manner, but for the perpetration of those identical evils, to guard against which God had commanded them to be destroyed. High places were not only built, and groves planted, but they were provided with images. The word מַצֵּבָה (*mat-tzēh-vāh'*) may indeed mean "a pillar," or "a consecrated pillar;" but the sequel of the account proves the idolatrous character of this worship: for the sacred writer proceeds to say, that "they did according to all the abo-

minations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel." 1 Kings xiv, 24. These high places and groves were, therefore, not only devoted to the worship of idols, and made the means of introducing and of extending the worst idolatrous practices, but, with these, the vilest licentiousness, the most filthy abominations of which even the Canaanitish nations had been guilty, were countenanced, encouraged, and practiced by the chosen people of God.

It will, of course, be understood that, notwithstanding the prevalence of these evils, the service of the temple was still maintained, and that many pious Israelites would there, and in other places, worship Jehovah, and deplore these sinful innovations. Yet the rapid spread of idolatry, and its consequent sins, is strongly marked by the sacred writer, who says, that Rehoboam "forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him." 2 Chron. xii, 1. There seems to have been little or no resistance to this awful defection. The king led the way, the people readily followed, until the vilest idolatry and impiety prevailed. Nor should it be forgotten that Judah was not, like Israel, at this time, in circumstances which threw special and powerful temptation in her way. Jeroboam would have required a strong faith in Jehovah, to have relied on the Divine word that he should reign, and to have exerted the full weight of his influence and authority to lead the people to a steady observance of the law, and a constant attendance on the services of the temple. But Rehoboam had no such obstacle placed in his way, no such tax upon his fidelity: with him, the limited extent of his territory, the possession of the temple, the covenant promise of God unto his father David,—all conspired to make fidelity to Jehovah the object of his choice. Yet, in those circumstances, he wickedly forsook the Lord, and the people readily joined in his iniquity.

This fearful infidelity soon brought upon Judah judicial punishment. The king of Egypt came up against Judah with an immense army; he had twelve hundred chariots, sixty thousand horsemen, and infantry without number. And although, immediately after the defection of the ten tribes, Rehoboam had very strongly fortified several of his cities, and provided them abundantly with provisions and munitions of war, these fell, one after the other, before the arms of the Egyptian king; while all the princes of the people took refuge in the capital. At length Shishak, having sufficiently secured the country in his rear, advanced to Jerusalem, and invested that city. At this season of alarm and calamity, Shemaiah the prophet came to the king and the princes that were with him, and delivered to them a brief, but fearful communication from heaven: "Thus

saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak." 2 Chron. xii, 5. No lengthened oration could have more fully set the case before them. God had protected and raised them to wealth and honor; but they had been unfaithful, they had forsaken God; and now, in the day of their trouble and danger, he leaves them to the power of Shishak, and to the aid of their false gods. The king and the princes heard and submitted to the word of reproof. They saw the excessive folly and wickedness of their past conduct, and humbled themselves before Jehovah; and He who delighteth in mercy accepted their contrition, and granted them "some deliverance." Verse 7. Shemaiah was sent again, with the gracious assurance that they should not be destroyed, nor the hand of Shishak be the instrument of pouring out the Divine wrath upon Jerusalem. But, to teach them the consequences of their sin, and to show how fearfully idolatry would expose them to humiliation and suffering, they were told that they must submit to Shishak, that they might feel the difference between the service of Heathen kings and the service of Jehovah. This judgment, tempered with mercy, was administered; and the king of Egypt, having taken the treasures from the temple and the palace, and the shields of gold which Solomon had made, departed from the city.

It is worthy of observation, that while this visitation exercised a salutary influence upon the public mind at Jerusalem, the successful aggression of Shishak upon the Hebrew capital was matter of great gratulation in Egypt; and, in consequence, the annals of that ancient country afford in this instance a striking corroboration of the Scriptural narrative. The successful exploits of this campaign are celebrated by a series of sculptures on the north external wall of the palace at Karnak: "The king, as usual, presents his prisoners to the deity of the temple, and to each figure is attached an oval, indicating the town or district he represents: one of which M. Champollion concludes to be the *Yooda Melchi*, or kingdom of Judah." — *Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians*, vol. i, p. 136. This is a most remarkable circumstance, especially as "the picture is so much mutilated, that nothing remains but three captives bound to a stake, which forms, as usual, the title-page at the beginning, and a portion of the triumphal procession at the end, which is so much dilapidated that only the names of the captives are legible." — *Osburn's Egypt*, pp. 113, 160. But for the defaced condition of the monument, it might have presented details, not only confirmatory, but illustrative, of the Scriptural narrative.

Delivered from this foreign aggression, Rehoboam repaired, as

far as possible, the injuries which it had occasioned. He restored the fortifications of his fenced cities; and, being unable to replace the golden shields, he supplied others which were made of brass. Yet, notwithstanding this severe chastisement, it is doubtful whether he ever fully returned to the service of Jehovah, or abandoned the groves and high places which he had prepared. Having reigned seventeen years, Rehoboam died, and was succeeded by his son Abijam.

This prince was no sooner seated on the throne, than he turned his thoughts to the recovery of that portion of the Hebrew nation which had become alienated from the sceptre of David. Having made the necessary preparations, he took the field at the head of a great army. But the king of Israel was not unprepared for the attack: he promptly met the army of Judah with one twice as numerous. But, as stated in the preceding chapter, notwithstanding the superior number of the Israelitish army, and the excellent generalship of Jeroboam, Abijam obtained a great victory. Yet this success did not enable him to effect his purpose of subduing Israel, and attaching it to his dominions: he, however, took several cities, and extended his frontier northward beyond Bethel. Abijam died after a short reign of three years.

Asa, the son of the late king, succeeded his father: he was superior in religious character to either of his predecessors on the throne of Judah. "He took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment." 2 Chron. xiv, 3, 4. He even removed his mother from her dignity as queen, on account of her idolatry and impurity, and destroyed her grove and burned her idol. And yet the sacred writer adds, "But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days." 1 Kings xv, 14. (See *Appendix*, note 85.)

Asa appears to have conducted the government under a deep sense of his responsibility to God, and with great devotedness to his will. Having by these reforms removed much evil, and put his kingdom into an orderly condition, he proceeded to repair the losses which it had sustained by the Egyptian invasion; and having consecrated "gold, and silver, and vessels," he placed them in the house of the Lord. He also greatly strengthened his army, and improved the fortifications of several cities; thus, in a season of peace, increasing his resources, and preparing for all contingencies of war.

The wisdom of this conduct was soon made manifest. Zerah, the

king of Ethiopia, came against Judah with a million of warriors, and three hundred chariots, and threatened not only the independence of the monarchy, but also the property and existence of the people. Asa, in this fearful emergency, acted as became a king of the Lord's elect nation. He cried earnestly to God, and trusted in him for success. At the same time he exerted himself to the utmost; and, aware of the frightful evils which must result from such a host of enemies passing through his country, he proved the purity and power of his faith by marching out to the frontier, and there giving battle to the enemy. The conduct of Asa in this instance evinced as much wisdom as courage. The place which he chose for this encounter was Mareshah, a city which lay about fifteen miles from Hebron westward. It was therefore just at the head of the wilderness which extends from Beersheba and Gaza to the borders of Libnah and Adullam. Here the rear of the king of Judah was supported by strongly fortified towns, whence ample supplies could be procured for his army; and where the mountains of Hebron and Jarmuth would, in case of need, cover his retreat; while the Ethiopians were placed at the utmost disadvantage, having an army and an enemy's country in front, and a wilderness behind them. In this position Asa attacked his invaders, and obtained a complete victory: "The Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah," and Asa pursued them. 2 Chron. xiv, 12, 13. It appears from the sacred narrative that the routed army, in its flight, fell back upon Gerar, and some other small towns, where they attempted to obtain refuge, and make a stand; but in vain; for Asa had followed them so closely, that all these places were taken, and the hostile force completely destroyed; so the men of Judah returned victorious, laden with spoil. This war must have greatly enriched the kingdom of Judah.

As Asa and his army were returning in triumph to Jerusalem, Azariah the prophet met them, and spake by the word of the Lord, assuring the king that this success was from Jehovah; reminding him and the people of their weakness and sufferings while they neglected his worship, and assuring them that they might reckon upon his faithful protection, so long as they continued obedient to his will.

Thus encouraged, Asa proceeded with spirit in the religious reformation which had been so auspiciously begun. In the first place, he labored to purge the land of idolatry, and sought by every means to discover and to destroy all remnants of this evil. He then renewed the altar of the Lord, and proceeded to give increasing publicity and spirit to the worship of Jehovah. These efforts, in connection with his success, produced a powerful impression not only

on the people of Judah, but also among their brethren in Israel. The consequence was, that considerable numbers from the other tribes came to Jerusalem, where, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa, in the third month, a great and solemn sacrificial service was held, when seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep were slain, and the people entered into a new covenant to seek the Lord with all their heart and all their soul. At the same time, the laws against idolatry were rigidly enforced on all classes. Under these influences the people publicly, and with general enthusiasm, pledged themselves to be faithful to Jehovah.

Peace and prosperity appear to have rested on Asa and his kingdom for the ensuing ten years. But it is painful to remark, that these appear to have produced a very unhappy effect on the mind of the king. At the expiration of this time, Baasha, king of Israel, being harassed by the continual emigration of his people, determined to adopt a bold measure for the purpose of preventing it. To this end he invaded Judah, and began to build Ramah, with the intent of fortifying it, that he might thus not only hinder his people from going up to Jerusalem, but at the same time curb the power and limit of the influence of his rival. Asa saw that the accomplishment of this purpose would be fatal, not only to the freedom and prosperity, but also to the independence, of his capital. He therefore adopted a course as unworthy of his fame, as it was unsound in policy. Not daring to hazard a contest in the field, nor trusting, as he had done, in Jehovah, he preferred purchasing the aid of the king of Syria. By sending him a gorgeous present, he persuaded Benhadad to invade Israel: a step which, indeed, effectually relieved him; for Baasha was immediately obliged to abandon his purpose, and march his army to the north, to protect his own dominions from Syrian aggression. Asa, exulting in his deliverance, made a levy from the whole nation, and appropriated the materials which the king of Israel had collected for the purpose of building Ramah, to the erection of Geba and Mizpeh.

But apparent prosperity is not always success. Asa had no sooner effected his object by diplomacy, than he was met by a prophet of Jehovah, who severely reprehended his unfaithfulness. From the address of the sacred messenger on this occasion, it may be gathered, that Asa was prevented from resisting the king of Israel, by an apprehension that, if he did, the sovereign of Syria would support Baasha, and that there would be thus arrayed against him an overwhelming force. But the prophet reminds him of his triumph over the Ethiopian host, and declares that his faithless and foolish conduct had alone prevented him from having an equally

glorious one over the Syrians; at the same time predicting that, as he had thus greatly increased the power and influence of his bitterest enemy, he should have wars to the end of his life.

This communication, instead of humbling the king of Judah, and leading him to repentance, filled him with rage. He instantly arrested the prophet, and threw him into prison; thus adding to his former fault the heinous sin of persecuting an inspired messenger of Jehovah. From this time we have no further information of the public affairs of Judah in his reign. Nor should we, in all probability, have had any respecting the king, had he not in his own case introduced a new mode of celebrating a royal funeral. The death of Asa appears to have been hastened by a sore disease in his feet; and it is recorded, that he oppressed some of the people, and that his personal sufferings did not lead him to ask help of the Lord, but that he trusted entirely to medical aid. These statements are evidently given to intimate that, in the latter part of his reign, he became proud, as well as impatient of reproof; and, consequently, was indisposed to prayer. When, therefore, we read that "the heart of Asa was perfect all his days," (2 Chron. xv, 17,) we are to understand the words, not as referring to his personal religious character, but as teaching that his hatred to idolatry was uniform, and continued unaltered all his life. This sense the context requires. But Asa died; "and they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odors and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art: and they made a very great burning for him." 2 Chron. xvi, 14. (See *Appendix*, note 86.)

In this reign, for the first time in the kingdom of Judah, we find a prophet of Jehovah silenced and punished. No political calamity or defeat in war could portend so great national danger as this crime. Under any circumstances, such conduct would have been very reprehensible: in this instance it assumes a most aggravated character. In the kingdom of Israel, the sin of Jeroboam introduced a state policy at variance with the law of God. It was, therefore, to be expected that his divinely appointed messengers would reprove those practices; and that, in consequence, all the power of royalty would stand opposed to their ministration. In Judah it was different. Here the established worship of the Mosaic economy was regularly conducted, and a series of divinely inspired prophets perpetuated a spiritual ministration replete with direct revelation from heaven. When, therefore, the sovereign of this kingdom arrayed his power against a holy prophet, and suppressed his inspired communication, we have not only an instance of a great public sin, and see the na-

tion deprived, to a certain extent, of a most important source of wisdom and power, but, what is far worse, we see a king of Judah renouncing the theocracy, and rejecting the interposition of God.

Asa was succeeded by Jehoshaphat. The first public efforts of this prince were directed to render efficient the frontier-defenses of the kingdom, and to secure the cities which his father Asa had taken from Israel. He appears to have entered upon this work in humble dependence upon Jehovah, and with a hearty devotedness to his service. God honored his upright conduct, and greatly blessed and strengthened him. Thus favored, Jehoshaphat endeavored to complete the religious reformation which had been begun in the reign of his father. In order to this, he "took away the high places and groves" which remained in Judah, 2 Chron. xvii, 6; thus endeavoring to destroy every incentive to idolatry, even those which, from their private character, or their accordance with patriarchal rites, had hitherto been tolerated. But, not satisfied with this, Jehoshaphat took active measures to imbue the mind of the people with the holy religion to which they were called. The means adopted for this purpose afforded much information respecting the religious history of these times. It appears that the king commanded, or, as would now be said, issued a commission to, five princes, nine Levites, and two priests, who were required to go through the cities of Judah to teach the people. With them they took "the book of the law of the Lord," that it might be the standard and guide of all their communications. Verses 7-9.

This circumstance, which is usually passed over without remark or investigation, is well worth serious attention. We have no particular information as to the precise object of this commission, or as to the manner in which the several functionaries discharged their task. The explicit statement of the text will, however, when carefully considered, afford some definite information respecting this important undertaking. The intention was to *teach* the people. And therefore, although we are not told specifically what was to be taught, when it is considered that this appointment was made by the king, and that the religion of the land was the basis of its political constitution, we cannot doubt that this teaching was intended to make the people acquainted with their religious and political duties. Further: the official character of the persons employed in this work indicates the nature and importance of the object. The princes would not only give to the instruction communicated all the weight of their position and influence, but would endeavor to make it bear upon the national well-being, by enlightening the people respecting

their political duty and interests, and persuading them to a faithful and zealous discharge of these obligations. The Levites would feel it their duty to teach and enforce the wide range of religious ceremonial, with all that pertained to the service of the temple and the ritual law; while the priests would impress upon the public mind the moral and religious bearing of these several laws and precepts; and thus place before the whole people, in all the wide range of their concerns, the means of maintaining a constant recognition of their relation to God.

The last object was more particularly provided for, by their having the book of the law with them. The circumstance here narrated is of great importance. It shows that, at this time, the writings of Moses were regarded as the supreme religious and political authority of the nation; that it was necessary to have constant reference to them in public instruction; and that there was, throughout the land, sufficient knowledge of letters to make an appeal to the written law conclusive. Again: it will be observed that this commission itinerated through the country, that every part of the people might be instructed. We may fairly presume that the capital, and other large cities, would possess superior means of instruction to the smaller and more distant places. This plan, however, met the exigencies of all, and especially of the most necessitous.

The result of this wise policy was soon observable. The people throughout the land became united, and devoted to the service of God; and Jehovah, consequently, threw his protecting shield over the country: "The fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat." 2 Chron. xvii, 10. Under this influence the Philistines paid to Jehoshaphat a considerable tribute in silver; and the Arabians, an equally valuable contribution in cattle. In those prosperous circumstances, the king carried on important works in the cities of Judah; and, at the same time, not only put all the fortified cities in the best possible condition, with a full equipment of stores and troops, but, in addition, greatly augmented his disposable army, perfected its organization, and placed its several sections under able officers. Verses 13-19.*

Thus far Jehoshaphat had conducted the affairs of his kingdom with great judgment and prudence. His piety, being conspicuous in all his arrangements, gave consistency and success to his efforts. It is how frequently do we see the religion of early life fail under the temptations incident to more advanced age! The king of Judah is evinced aberration of judgment by forming, or consenting to,

* It is more than probable that the numbers in the text are over-estimated.

a matrimonial connection between his son and the daughter, not only of the wicked Ahab, but also of the idolatrous Jezebel. Bishop Patrick has suggested, as the only possible apology for this conduct, the hypothesis, that Jehoshaphat might have hoped, in case Ahab should die without male issue, that he would be able to re-unite all Israel under the government of his son. If this was the motive by which he was influenced, it only shows, that he was one of a very great number of princes who have adopted a most unwarrantable and ridiculous line of state policy, and who, as the result, have reaped bitter, but deserved, disappointment.

This alliance soon led the king of Judah into trouble. On a visit to Ahab, he was persuaded, even against the admonition of an inspired prophet, to aid him in an attempt against Ramoth-gilead, which was then held by the king of Syria. Here he was in great danger, failed in the enterprise, and narrowly escaped with his life. Returning to his own country he was met by Jehu, the son of Hanani the prophet, the same person who many years before had predicted the ruin of the house of Baasha king of Israel. The man of God severely reproved Jehoshaphat for this ungodly alliance; and, while admitting the good that he had done, condemned him for aiding those who hated Jehovah.

The king acted as if sensible of the danger which he had escaped, and immediately proceeded to place the jurisprudence of his country in the most efficient condition. For this purpose he traveled through the country, appointing judges in every city, charging them to perform their duty as in the presence of Jehovah. In Jerusalem also he appointed a special court of Levites to superintend ecclesiastical affairs and the laws of inheritance.

After Jehoshaphat had completed these improvements, he was menaced with a new and unlooked-for danger. Moab and Ammon, with other neighboring nations, having formed an alliance against Judah, their united forces made an army so numerous and mighty, as to threaten ruin to the city of Jerusalem, and the entire kingdom. In this emergency Jehoshaphat acted in a manner becoming a wise and pious king of Judah. He threw himself fully on the protection and mercy of Jehovah. In order to secure his aid, he proclaimed a fast throughout the whole kingdom; and it is worthy of notice, that the religious reformation which had been effected operated so favorably, that the people generally responded to the call, and came up to Jerusalem to seek the Lord. The result forms a memorable event in the annals of the kingdom. The sovereign and his people assembled in the court of the temple; and Jehoshaphat, after the example of Solomon, "stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem," and

prayed earnestly to God. (2 Chron. xx, 5.) This supplication, delivered without form or apparent premeditation, is "one of the most sensible, pious, correct, and, as to its composition, one of the most elegant, prayers ever offered under the Old-Testament dispensation." Having been delivered under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is incorporated into the text of the Bible. The answer was immediate, and full of consolation: for when the king ceased, and all Judah waited upon God, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon Jahaziel, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the congregation, "and he said, Harken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you:" he then proceeded to assure them that God regarded their cause as his own; that therefore they were called upon to dismiss all fear, and to feel no apprehension from the multitude of their foes. He then assured them that as the cause was the Lord's, he would fight for them, and they should not even be required to share in the conflict, but to be still, and trust in him. The prophet thence proceeded to show how the king should conduct himself, in order to secure all this deliverance. Verses 13-17. Thus far the scene was grand. Here Judah acts worthy of his covenant relation to Jehovah: but the crowning glory of the case was yet to come. When the prophet ceased, so full were all of confidence in the Lord, whose pervading Spirit taught all hearts, and influenced every mind, that the Levites burst into a song of praise, while the king bowed his head, and all Judah and Jerusalem fell prostrate, worshiping Jehovah. How glorious are the results of genuine faith in God! Jehoshaphat and his people exulted in their deliverance, although the army of their enemies lay in all their might within thirty-six miles of the capital. But God had undertaken their cause, and they trusted in him. The conduct of the king on the following day was worthy of himself. He rose early in the morning, and, obedient to the Divine command, marched to meet his foes in the wilderness of Tekoa; and, as they went, he exhorted the people, not to deeds of valor, but to the exercise of faith: "Believe," said he, "in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." Verse 20. The result justified the prediction. God brought ruin to the invading host, and the army of Judah had only to collect the spoil, and return in triumph to Jerusalem. Booth has a happy conjecture as to the means by which this miraculous victory was obtained. He says, "I conceive that the Edomites, who had been placed as an ambush against the Judahites, either by mistake or designedly, attacked the Ammonites and the Moabites; and that these, uniting, repelled the attack, and in a great measure destroyed the Edomites;

the latter, quarreling among themselves, mutually destroyed one another."

The return of the king and his people, laden with spoil, to the capital, going up first to the house of the Lord to praise him for his goodness, is one of the finest incidents in the theocratic history of Judah. It was such obedience and faith that made up the strength of Israel. The results of this victory were greater than those of a thousand battles won by the sword; for "the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel. So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about." Verses 29, 30.

Yet, notwithstanding this Divine interposition and glorious success, Jehoshaphat seems to have remained unconvinced of the impropriety of his alliance with the sinful house of Ahab. While Ahaziah reigned over Israel, Jehoshaphat was induced to join this prince in an endeavor to revive the commercial navigation to the East, which had been found so productive in the time of Solomon: for this purpose, by their joint efforts, a navy was provided at Ezion-geber. But the result proved that the enterprise was neither conducted with adequate skill, nor under the blessing of Providence. To this day, the entrance to this port is rendered very dangerous by a ledge of rocks; and it seems that the fleet was lost, probably upon this reef, in their attempt to leave the harbor.

From the peculiar construction of the narrative of these events in the Book of Kings, it is rendered very doubtful whether, in respect of this expedition, Jehoshaphat at first refused to co-operate with the king of Israel, and afterward consented; or whether, having united with Ahaziah at first, and meeting with the disaster above referred to, he then prosecuted a similar enterprise alone. 1 Kings xxii, 48, 49. It is, however, certain, that this unholy alliance was the cause of the breaking of the ships at Ezion-geber, as this was specially communicated to Jehoshaphat by Eliczer the prophet. 2 Chron. xx, 37. Nor was this the last danger to which the king of Judah was subjected from the same cause. In the reign of the next king of Israel, Jehoram, Jehoshaphat was induced to join him in a war with Moab; from which, again, he was extricated only by miraculous power, through the instrumentality of Elisha the prophet, as recorded in the last chapter.

Soon after these events, Jehoshaphat died. He left his kingdom in a flourishing condition: for, although all the high places had not been destroyed, the knowledge and practice of true religion had been greatly extended, justice was more efficiently administered, and every branch of state economy greatly improved. Yet when it is consider-

ed that almost all the evils and dangers of his reign had arisen from the unhappy connection which had been formed with the house of Ahab, it will be admitted that, even at the death of this king, the future prospects of Judah were not bright. If the influence of Athaliah was so pernicious while her pious father-in-law lived, what might not be apprehended when she was invested with all the powers possessed by the wife of the reigning king?

Jehoram ascended the throne of his father, and assumed the exercise of royal authority under circumstances which might have afforded him hopes of abundant prosperity and honor. But alas! he soon showed that his conduct and reign were to be the reverse of his father's. Although Jehoshaphat had wisely employed his other sons, and distributed them into various cities, that the kingdom might be fully reserved for his heir; yet no sooner had Jehoram grasped the supreme power, than he had them all put to death. This was the first time anything so horribly atrocious was perpetrated by the house of David. But this wickedness was only indicative of the future character of the sovereign. Forsaking the way of his father, he gave himself up to the influence of his wife, and to all the wicked and idolatrous practices of Ahab her father. In the early part of this reign the Edomites revolted; and, although Jehoram was able to defeat them in battle, he could not again reduce them to obedience. But, not satisfied with forsaking Jehovah himself, and placing the whole influence of his crown and court in opposition to his will, and in favor of Sidonian idolatry, he actually enforced this apostasy, "and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah thereto." 2 Chron. xxi, 11.

But it was not the Divine purpose that Jehoram should go on in this course of iniquity unwarned. In this instance a most unusual course was adopted: a written epistle was sent to the king, in which his wicked course was explicitly pointed out, and its punishment plainly denounced. Verses 12-14. (See also *Appendix*, note 87.) By whomsoever this letter was written, events proved it to be truly prophetic. A combination of Arabians and Philistines soon assailed the infatuated king. The progress of the assault was as rapid, as its power was irresistible. The extent of this incursion, in reference to the country generally, is not specified; but we are told that they "carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons." Verse 17. After this, Jehoram was seized with the predicted disease, of which, after languishing two years, he miserably died. The people, to mark their sense of his infamous conduct, refused to bury him in the royal

sepulchre, or to give him a royal funeral . After a short reign of only eight years, he had so completely satiated his people with his vices and misgovernment, that no one wished his life protracted another day: "He departed without being desired." Verse 20. Ahaziah, the youngest son of Jehoram, who had been saved from the massacre of his family, succeeded his father on the throne. He was the son of Athaliah, who was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel; and when we read that "his mother was his counselor to do wickedly," (2 Chron. xxii, 3,) we may easily apprehend the character of his reign. He, too, pursued with eagerness the policy of his father, and impelled the kingdom onward towards an entire rejection of Jehovah, and a full establishment of idolatry. But his career was short. He accompanied his relation Jehoram, king of Israel, in an attempt on Ramoth-gilead, where the latter was wounded, and obliged to return to Jezreel. Here he was visited by the young king of Judah, who, in consequence, fell a victim to the fury of Jehu, when he destroyed the posterity of Ahab, having reigned but one year. Not only did the king fall by the hand of the son of Nimshi, but forty-two of his immediate relatives, who were going down to Jezreel to visit the royal family of Israel, met this furious enemy of the house of Ahab in his way to Samaria, and were also every one of them cut off.

But calamitous as were those circumstances to the house of David, they were neither the last nor the worst. Athaliah, seeing that her husband and son were both dead, determined to seize the royal power for herself; and, possessing the wickedness and energy of her mother Jezebel, she proceeded to destroy all the seed-royal of the house of David, and conducted her purpose with so much promptitude and daring, that nothing but the providential preservation of the infant Joash by his paternal aunt prevented the full accomplishment of her murderous design.

Athaliah, however, so far succeeded as to possess herself of the supreme power, which she appears to have exercised as wickedly as it was begun, but at the same time with great talent and energy. As might have been expected, her main design was to overthrow the worship of Jehovah, and to establish that of Baalim and the other objects of Sidonian worship. So daringly did she prosecute this purpose, that she had broken up, and to a great extent dismantled, the house of God, and had taken all the dedicated things of the sanctuary for the service of Baalim. Thus was Jerusalem fast sinking into the vortex of idolatry, and Judah becoming alienated from the true God.

After six years of this misrule, when Joash, who had been protected by his aunt and her husband the high priest, was seven years old, Jehoiada, who filled this sacred office, wearied of the domination

of a murderess, and roused to action by the constant aggression made upon the religion of his fathers and the worship of his God, determined to inaugurate the child Joash into the royal dignity. Having concerted all his measures with great ability, and obtained the attendance of an increased number of priests and Levites, he placed the young prince in the temple, anointed him with oil, put the crown on his head, and saluted him as king. Athaliah soon heard the noise and shouting; and, proceeding to the temple, the whole truth flashed on her mind. She shouted, "A conspiracy! a conspiracy!" and rent her clothes, hoping to collect her friends in support of her power; but in vain: she was surrounded by order of the high priest, taken out of the temple, and put to death. Thus was the sovereignty of Judah wrested from hands stained with blood, and a mind besotted with the vilest idolatry, and placed under the guardianship of those who were devoted to the service of the Lord.

The commencement of the reign of Joash, although he was a minor, was auspicious. Under the guardianship of Jehoiada, his public measures were directed to restore the worship of Jehovah. But, during the preceding reigns, the temple had not only been despoiled of its treasures and consecrated furniture, but the sacred structure itself had been so injured and neglected, that it had sunk into great decay. The young king appears to have noticed the dilapidated state of the sanctuary in the early part of his reign, and to have commanded that measures should be immediately taken for its restoration and repair. It seems, however, that the sources of income which had been ordained for the support of the temple had been diverted from their appropriate object, and made perquisites for the priests and Levites; so that, amid the confusion and disorder which had been introduced with idolatry, the unfaithfulness of those to whom the worship and honor of Jehovah had been intrusted exercised the most pernicious influence on the interests of true religion. In consequence of this state of things, instead of the priests and Levites joyfully and heartily laboring to carry the king's purpose into effect, they "hastened it not." 2 Chron. xxiv, 5. Jehoiada, although zealous for the service of God, appears to have lacked spirit and energy. During the minority of Joash he had the chief direction of affairs; and yet the high places were not taken away, but the people continued to burn incense in these pernicious nurseries of idolatry; and, consequently, many years of golden opportunity appear to have passed away with little being done to restore the house of God to a safe and decent condition: for, in the three and twentieth year of the king's reign, "the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house." 2 Kings xii, 6.

At this time the king zealously applied himself to the work ; and, finding that the regular taxes which should have been applied to the use of the sanctuary had been either so long remitted that there was a general opposition to their payment, or had been so commonly diverted into other channels that there was little chance of fully restoring them to their legitimate purpose, he, with the consent of the high priest, turned the impost into a voluntary gift. This measure proved successful. The temple was fully restored, and the same means were then continued to supply vessels of gold and silver for its ministrations according to the original institute. Thus were the services of the sanctuary resumed, and continued all the days of Jehoiada, who died at the advanced age of one hundred and thirty, having "done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house." 2 Chron. xxiv, 16.

We may here pause for momentary observation. The kingdom of Judah, from the accession of Rehoboam, has passed under our review. The manifestations of Divine care and support have been constantly observable. Yet this favored kingdom has often been brought into danger by the prevalence of idolatry, the unfaithfulness of the people repeatedly threatening to destroy the purpose for which God had raised them up. At length Jehoshaphat repairs the disorder, checks the waywardness of the people, and leads them back to the service of their God. But how soon is this bright prospect blasted ! His unwise and unholy alliance with Ahab sowed the seeds of apostasy, guilt, and infamy, which in the following reigns brought the people into awful alienation from God, and the state to the brink of ruin. Yet even from this fallen condition did the mercy of God raise them. By the instrumentality of the child Joash, and of the pious and venerable high priest, error was rebuked and checked, the house of God repaired, his worship restored, and bright hopes raised of glory and happiness to the kingdom of Judah. But were they realized ? Alas ! no sooner had the venerable high priest sunk into the grave, than these hopes perished with him.

Immediately after his decease, the princes of Judah, who had been always devoted to idolatrous practices, so flattered the king by their obsequious attentions, that he was soon seduced from the service of Jehovah, and himself led into a course of idolatry. The king and his court "left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols." 2 Chron. xxiv, 18. But the mercy of the Lord followed them, and "sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord ; and they testified against them : but they would not give ear," (verse 19,) but carried their wickedness to the utmost excess. At length the Spirit of God was poured out upon Zechar-

riah the high priest; and, "when he saw the transgression of the king, and of the people, burning incense to an idol in the house of the sanctuary of the Lord on the day of expiation, and preventing the priests of the Lord from offering the burnt-offerings, sacrifices, daily oblations, and services, as written in the book of the law of Moses; he stood above the people, and said"* unto them, "Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you." Verse 20. Harassed and provoked at this bold reproof, and alarmed at the effect which it might have on the people, the king and his courtiers conspired against the priest of the Lord; and, exciting the passions of the populace, they perpetrated the most shocking crime which men could commit. Unchecked by the holy office he bore, by the Divine influence under which he spake, or the sacred spot on which he stood, they assailed the messenger of God, and stoned him to death in the court of the house of the Lord.

In addition to the sin of murdering a prophet of the Lord while fulfilling his vocation, and that prophet the high priest, this crime had in it other elements of aggravation and enormity. The king and the prophet were relations: the king's aunt was the prophet's mother. They had been companions in childhood and youth; and, above all, the king owed his life, his crown, and his prosperity to the noble intervention and zealous devotion of the father and mother of the martyred priest. In those circumstances, we need not wonder that the Lord should have permitted his dying servant to intimate to his murderers their approaching punishment; for when Zechariah died, he said, "The Lord look upon it, and require it."† Verse 22. And so he did. For at the end of that year, Hazael, the proud and daring king of Syria, having overcome the king of Israel, and drained that kingdom of its wealth, humbling the king to the dust, marched against Judah. He first invested Gath, and took it. He then marched upon Jerusalem; and, although the Syrian army was small in comparison of that of Joash, the malediction of Heaven being on the arms of Judah, God gave them into the hand of their enemies; so that all the princes of the people who had seduced Joash, and conspired with him to murder the prophet of the Lord, were destroyed, and their property sent as spoil to Damascus. From Joash, also, they extorted all the property in the treasury of the temple, and all the sacred vessels, whether left there by his fathers,

* Targum.

† Whitby has, by a lengthened argument, endeavored to prove that this person was the Zecharias spoken of by Christ, Matthew xxiii, 35. Dr. Adam Clarke is of the same opinion; and Jerome says that the Gospel of the Nazarenes reads, "Jehoiada," instead of "Barachias."

or recently placed there by himself: and, having thus reduced him to an abject condition, they left him in great distress.

It appears that Joash was not only greatly impoverished at this time, but also sorely diseased. Whether he had been wounded in the war, or afflicted with illness, we cannot tell; but soon after two foreign servants in his household murdered him in his bed, and Amaziah, his son, reigned in his stead. Compare 2 Kings xii, with 2 Chron. xxiv.

This young prince copied the example of his father. At the beginning of his reign "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." 2 Chron. xxv, 2. As soon as he had fully secured the royal power, he put to death the men who had killed his father. But, being guided by the laws of Moses, he did not destroy their children. Yet, although Amaziah worshiped Jehovah, he did not destroy the groves and high places, which continued to shed their baneful influence over the religion of the land; for here the people continued to sacrifice and to burn incense, to the dishonor of Jehovah, and the reproach of his name. Early in this reign, the king determined to attempt the conquest of Edom, which had revolted from Judah in the days of Joram. For this purpose he collected an army of three hundred thousand men out of his own country, besides one hundred thousand men which he had hired out of Israel, for a hundred talents of silver. But, as he was marshaling this host, and preparing for the war, "there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the Lord is not with Israel;" adding, that if he persevered to go to the war in this company he should surely fail. The king immediately asked, "But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel?" To which the man of God replied, "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this." It is better for thee to part with both the money and the men than to proceed upon an important enterprise under the frown of Heaven. The anger or blessing of Jehovah is of more importance than either the hundred talents, or the hundred thousand men. Verses 7-9.

Amaziah obeyed, and sent away the men of Israel, who, enraged at his conduct, ravaged some of the cities of Judah on their way home. He then put his own troops in the best possible condition, and marched to invade Edom; and, notwithstanding his diminished number of forces, his success was complete: he smote ten thousand men in the Valley of Salt, and took another ten thousand prisoners; after which he returned in triumph to his capital. But, though thus successful over his enemies, the expedition was fatal to Amaziah; for, after he had returned from the slaughter of the Edomites, "he

brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them." Verse 14. This absurd and wicked conduct brought down the anger of God upon him ; but here, as in other cases, before Jehovah punished, he warned the offender of his peril. Again a prophet was sent to him to point out his sin and danger. But, as he talked with the king, Amaziah fiercely threatened him, saying, "Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten?" The man of God, thus repulsed, simply added, "I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel." Verse 16.

It does not appear that Amaziah was affected by this fearful threatening. He immediately afterward challenged the king of Israel to war. Whether this arose from mere vain-glory, or was occasioned by the violent conduct of the men whom he had dismissed, after having hired them as auxiliaries in his war with Edom, does not appear from the sacred narrative. However this may be, Joash advised him to be still, and not to rush into ruin. Yet more incensed at this conduct, the king of Judah determined upon war : the armies met, and Judah was completely defeated. Not only was the army routed in the field, but the king himself was taken prisoner. Joash of Israel, having his proud adversary completely in his power, resolved to inflict an ample chastisement. He therefore marched with his royal captive to Jerusalem, where he brake down a great part of the walls of the city, took all the treasures of the temple and of the king's house, and, after pillaging the city as far as he pleased, and taking hostages for the faithful performance of the conditions which he had imposed upon his prostrate adversary, he returned to Samaria.

We hear nothing further of Amaziah, except that many years afterward he was murdered by conspirators at Lachish ; and Azariah, his son, was placed on the throne in his stead. This prince, who is better known in sacred history as Uzziah, was only sixteen years old when he began to reign ; yet, when he entered upon the duties of this high office, he was remarkable for his personal piety. He had sought God in his early youth, and set himself to do that which was right. His first public enterprise appears to have been directed against the south of Edom, where he recovered Elath. He then conducted successful wars against the Philistines and Arabians. Awed by his prowess, the Ammonites submitted to Judah, and paid tribute.

Uzziah, encouraged by this prosperity, bent his mind to the organization and improvement of his army ; he repaired the fortifica-

tions of his capital, and other cities of defense; the several great sections of state were intrusted to men of integrity and ability; and the resources of the empire were cultivated with considerable success: so that the king was able to place every branch of the public service in a state of efficiency. For the protection of his servants and cattle, he built forts far away in the wilderness; so that he was respected even to the frontier of Egypt.

Although Uzziah appears to have acted like a wise prince, and did not neglect any national interest; yet, in times so full of turbulence and war, we need not feel surprised that the army engaged his principal attention. In order to render his troops formidable, he had prepared for them abundance of the best armor of every kind, offensive and defensive, shields and spears, helmets and habergeons, bows, and slings to cast stones. There is, however, one production of the martial genius of Judah in this reign, which merits special notice. When it is considered how utterly inefficient all military power had previously been when applied against walled cities, it is remarkable that, for the first time in the annals of the world, we meet with military engines constructed in Jerusalem during the reign of Uzziah, and adapted to the purpose of throwing heavy missiles, either for aggression or defense, in the siege of cities. The sacred writer says, "He made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal." 2 Chron. xxvi, 15. Without debating the accuracy of the various opinions which have been formed of these engines, we may satisfy ourselves by referring to two points. Gesenius maintains that they were, properly speaking, *inventions*; and Bochart, that they were contrived for the projection of stones.* If these opinions are correct, then it appears that the Hebrews, B. C. 800, invented machines which completely revolutionized the art of war, as far as it related to the assault and defense of fortified places, and introduced a new era into its history.

Thus far Uzziah appears to have acted in his public capacity in obedience to Jehovah: "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord;" he did not go after idols, he supported the worship of the true God. But the sacred writer is careful to inform us, that he did not remove the high places and groves, where the people offered idolatrous worship, and burnt incense, before false gods. His reign, therefore, hitherto was not disgraced by sinful innovation; nor had it the virtue of purifying the church.

Uzziah did not maintain even this qualified fame. "When he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he trans-

* *Phaleg*, lib. iii, cap. vii; *Canaan*, lib. i, cap. 35.

gressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense." 2 Chron. xxvi, 16. In this unhallowed attempt he was repelled by Azariah, the high priest, who was supported by a valiant body of eighty members of the priesthood. While these, declaring the law of the Lord, resisted the royal intruder, and he, excited to anger, persisted in his purpose, God undertook his own cause, and smote him with leprosy: so that he hasted to get out of the temple, and was cut off from the congregation of Israel, and remained a leper to the day of his death.

It will be necessary to remark more particularly on this event, as its true character has been greatly mistaken, and therefore seriously misrepresented, by several able writers of the present age. Bishop Russel, speaking of it, ascribes Uzziah's fault to "an excessive but ill-directed zeal for the honor of Jehovah, to whose worship he resolved to devote his personal exertions." "Impelled by this mistaken motive, he invaded the sacerdotal office." Can this account be correct? Did Jehovah inflict such a fatal punishment on a good king for a mistake, when his actuating principle was a deep and zealous concern for the glory of his God? Without the most clear exposition of motive and character in the sacred text, such an interpretation cannot be received. But is it so sustained? Certainly not. Does the sacred writer ascribe this action to zeal for God, or to pride engendered by a long course of success? Unquestionably to the latter. "His heart was lifted up," not by any vain impulse, or by any sudden ebullition of conceit, but by a lofty and incorrigible pride: it was lifted up "to destruction." It is singular to have to correct the error of a bishop in this direction. If zeal for God had animated Uzziah, the history of his predecessors and the religious condition of his kingdom offered ample scope for its honorable exercise. It might have been gloriously displayed in the abolition of groves and high places, and in the extermination of idolatry. Or he might, like David, have met his people for the interchange of holy sentiments, for the cultivation of sterling piety, and for singing the praises of Jehovah, without violating the Divine law. Like Solomon and Jehoshaphat, he might have joined with his subjects in prayer in the courts of the Lord's house, and have received answers of peace. But this was not his motive: pride was his sin, and his ruin.

By another class of writers this event is spoken of as "a symptom" of the struggle which is supposed to have existed between the regal and the priestly power, from the death of Jehoiada till the dissolution of the kingdom. To this party contest is ascribed the murder of Zechariah, the death of Athaliah, the assassination of Jehoash, and the leprosy of Uzziah. (See Kitto's Cyclopædia, art. Judah,

kingdom of.) A more convenient opportunity will occur for discussing the general question of the relative political position and conduct of the priesthood and regal power in this kingdom. But in passing, we briefly notice the preceding cases. In doing this, it will be our chief object to sustain what we regard to be the essential verity of revelation.

With respect to the cause of the death of Zechariah, it may be asked, Is it, or is it not, true that Joash had sunk deeply into idolatry, had been often reprov'd by God's prophets without effect, and that on this occasion he was in the temple with his idolatrous courtiers, acting in such a manner that "the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah," enabling him to rebuke the king; and that, for acting in obedience to this Divine impulse, the inspired priest was basely murdered within the precincts of the temple?—are these undoubted Scripture verities? And if so, is it right to attribute this murder to a party or political quarrel? No fact is more certain than that Zechariah died a martyr for the truth,—that he was cruelly murdered while faithfully discharging his religious duty.

The death of Athaliah is another case. Here also the question presents itself, Did not this woman violate every great principle of the Jewish policy? Had she not stained her hands in the blood of her own relatives? Was she not, in every sense of the term, a usurper? And was not her whole life a series of treason against the majesty of Jehovah, and against his laws? If so, what was the duty of Jehoiada, even admitting him to act with the most perfect disinterestedness and piety? If any answer, based on sound political and religious principles, can be given to this question, it must be, that one thus deeply stained with crime, and dangerous to the public weal, was worthy of death.

Particular stress is laid on the death of Joash; and it is alleged that "the assassination of Joash in his bed by his own servants is described in the Chronicles as a revenge taken upon him by the priestly party for his murder of the sons of Jehoiada; and the same fate from the same influence fell upon his son Amaziah, if we may so interpret the words, (2 Chron. xxv, 27,) 'From the time that Amaziah turned away from following Jehovah, they made a conspiracy against him.'" In the case of Joash it is said, "His own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest." 2 Chron. xxiv, 25. But holy Scripture does not say, that this was "a revenge taken upon him by the priestly party." Nor is the inference warranted by anything in the scope of the narrative. It is stated that his murderers were his own servants, and that they were foreigners. And it is very credible that there might have been an influential party who regarded the conduct

of the king as fatal to the interests of the nation, and who wickedly took his punishment into their own hands. But the mere mention that the murder of Zechariah was taken into account by these persons, is not sufficient to convict the priests of the murder of the king.

The case of Amaziah is a similar instance. His apostasy from Jehovah brought his kingdom to the brink of ruin. His subjects, seeing this, conspired against his life; but there is not a shadow of a proof that the priesthood had any hand in the murder. The sacerdotal order might, and it is to be feared did, evince much wickedness in their private character: but, generally, in this part of the history, they appear to have adhered faithfully to the institutions of the Lord's house, and to have resisted sinful innovation with firmness and zeal.

It will now be necessary to pay more particular attention to the nature and influence of the prophetic office. Hitherto the prophets have appeared as occasionally connected with the scope of the history, acting in general as extraordinary messengers from God, for the purpose of upholding his authority by checking and reproofing the aberrations of the kings and the apostasy of the people. But from the time of Uzziah, to the termination of the monarchy, we have not only a continued series of these ministers, and, generally, several of them acting contemporaneously; but the substance of their communications is also in our hands. Those sublime discourses which were delivered to the Israelites by the chosen servants of Jehovah, under the immediate influence of his Holy Spirit, can therefore now be read in connection with the history, and some idea be thus formed of the nature and extent of the Divine communications with which they were favored. Reasons have been given, in a preceding chapter, for believing that the principal object in the institution of the prophetic office was the maintenance of spiritual religion; and in this view it is easy to perceive the harmony which subsists between the several parts of their holy vocation. Here is an institution by which persons are specially raised up, who, realizing in their personal character spiritual religion, and leading the simple and devout Israelites in their social worship, are, at least many of them, not only selected by God to see those future events which affected the political interests of Israel, but also more highly favored with a knowledge of the times and facts of Messiah's coming, and of the mighty blessings which he should diffuse, and the glorious kingdom which he should establish in the earth.

There can be no doubt that it was as a prophet that David took a prominent part in the spiritual worship in his own tabernacle; and we have already stated our opinion, that in his time other similar

places were appointed, where a spiritual worship was offered unto God. Even in the days of Malachi this practice had not ceased: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." Mal. iii, 16. It seems impossible to take a just view of the religion of Judah at this period but on this principle. We are aware that different sentiments have obtained; and may now refer to one striking case, which bears immediately on the reign of Uzziah. Take a calm and impartial survey of the religion of the Hebrews, from the death of Solomon to this time; and, even looking on the public affairs of the nation, the aspect is fearfully checkered: the prevalence of idolatry alternates with the worship of Jehovah: the throne and the temple are often stained with blood: even under the best influence, the high places are not destroyed, the worship of filthy idols still continues, incense is burned before the creations of impure imagination. And, when all this is justly estimated, let the mind inquire into the state of individual morals and religion. How did the people live and act in respect to the requirements of the Divine law? Is it not an inevitable induction, that there must have been a fearful amount of personal ungodliness and disobedience to have made such public and national delinquencies possible? How surprised, then, must the reader be to peruse the opinions of Bishop Horsley on the first chapter of Isaiah! The learned prelate says, "The scene seems not to represent the manners of the Jews in any one of the four reigns in which he prophesied. For, of the four kings named in the title of the book, the first two and last were godly princes, and in their reigns there were was no heavy complaint against the people. But, in the reign of Ahaz, idolatry was established, and the temple service neglected. In his reign, therefore, there could be little of that hypocritical attachment to the ritual service with which the people are reproached." And therefore it is inferred that all this took place in the imagination of the prophet! Is it, then, to be supposed that a whole nation was turned from sin to righteousness, or the reverse, as a king might order the ritual services of the temple to be regularly maintained, or idolatrous rites to be celebrated? The supposition is alike opposed to the nature of religion, and the moral constitution of man.

We do not pretend to state the exact time when this portion of Holy Scripture was written. But there is nothing in it which might not apply to the religious state of Judah in the time of Uzziah. And, if it were then delivered, we may readily admit the judgment of Lowth, that it "contains a severe remonstrance against the corruptions prevailing among the Jews of *that time*." The only reason for objecting to this application is, that the desolation spoken

of (Isa. i, 7-9) does not seem to apply to the prosperity of Uzziah's time. But the pillage of Jerusalem by Joash king of Israel, in the preceding reign, must have been fresh in the recollection of the people, and might therefore be well referred to as a well-known instance of the penal consequences of sin.

But, whether delivered in this or the following reign, it is important to consider the religious effect of the delivery of such a sermon as this. A man invested with divine influence and authority, taking his stand at the gate of the temple, or some other place of public resort, and in the audience of the princes and people of Judah delivering such living thoughts, in the burning words of Isaiah's first chapter, must have had an influence on the public mind which could not be easily shaken off, and which must have been attended with important religious benefit. But this chapter, although complete in itself, and a most spirited and energetic address, was followed by others equally pointed and powerful. The second, third, and fourth chapters of this prophet were, it is more than probable, also delivered in the latter part of Uzziah's reign, if they do not make one continued discourse or series of addresses. Here the kingdom and glory of Messiah, and the conversion of the Gentiles, are predicted, chap. ii, 1-6; the punishment of Judah for idolatry and unbelief threatened, verses 6-17; and the destruction of idolatry announced. Verses 18-22. The Babylonish invasion is foretold, and its fatal effect on the pride and luxury of the people, chap. iii, 1-26; iv, 1; while the surviving remnant are led to look for future blessing. Chap. iv, 2-6. Another separate discourse is given in the fifth chapter, where, as in the first, there is a faithful reproof of existing corruption, and a more explicit prediction of the Chaldean invasion. This was also, in all probability, delivered in the latter part of Uzziah's reign. The sixth chapter was revealed in the year of Uzziah's death. In this the prophet describes a glorious revelation of Jehovah with which he was favored, when his special appointment and the obduracy of Judah were declared.

It was under such influence and teaching, sustained by the ritual services of the temple, that this kingdom stood when Uzziah died, and his son Jotham succeeded to the sovereignty, having administered the affairs of the kingdom during his father's seclusion on account of his disease. The reign of this prince was marked by uniform piety and success. He improved or repaired the entrance to the temple. He also conducted a successful war against the Ammonites, and compelled them to pay a tribute of a hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and an equal quantity of barley. Although we are told that in this reign Pekah king of

Israel, in conjunction with Resin king of Syria, began to make aggressions on Judah, we have no information as to the amount of their success, which appears to have taken place just before the death of Jotham. Although it is said that Jotham "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord," and "became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God," (2 Chron. xxvii, 2, 6,) this language must be confined to his public conduct, and his steady adherence to the worship of Jehovah; for the sacred writer is careful to inform us, that the groves and high places remained, that incense was still offered to idols, and therefore that there was not a manifestation of godly zeal either by the king or the people. During the sixteen years of this reign, the ministrations of the prophets were continued: its most remarkable manifestation in the course of this period was the raising up of Micah, as if to second the teaching of Isaiah. According to the best authorities, the first two chapters of Micah's prophecy were delivered in this reign. (See Townsend's Arrangement.) In the first, the prophet denounces the approaching ruin of Samaria and Jerusalem. Verses 1-9. In this section the inspired messenger exhibits idolatry as the cause of all this calamity; from thence to the end of the second chapter, he directs attention to a fearful amount of collateral evil, which, it is repeated, must terminate in national ruin; and the section closes with a promise of restoration.

Ahaz succeeded his father Jotham; and if during the reign of the latter, when the authority of Jehovah was publicly acknowledged, idolatry and iniquity so fearfully prevailed, what might not be apprehended from the conduct of his degenerate son? Ahaz, like his father, was an exception to the general character of the kings of Judah. He was never faithful to God; Jotham never relapsed into idolatry. Although Ahaz ascended the throne at the age of twenty, he appears at once to have plunged into idolatry. Not only did he copy the evil practices of the kings of Israel in the worship of Baalim; he also went to the utmost length of cruelty and crime, and actually burned his sons in the fire in sacrifice to Moloch. (See *Appendix*, note 88.)

Severe national calamity was the consequence of this conduct. The king of Israel invaded the country, slew one hundred and twenty thousand men, the flower of the nation, in one day, and carried away twice as many persons into captivity. Although the latter were afterwards sent back, yet the loss of life and property, and the national humiliation, occasioned by this defeat, must have been extreme. In addition to this, Edom rebelled, and not only declared its independence, but also made an incursion into Judah, from whence they

returned victorious, with captives and booty. The Philistines passed their borders, and wrested several considerable towns from Judah on its western frontier, with an important tract of country. At the same time, Rezin king of Syria attacked the extreme south of the kingdom, took Elath on the Red Sea, and permanently retained it. Nor were these enemies content with acting separately. The two most powerful of them, Syria and Israel, united themselves by treaty, and that not only for the purpose of temporary aggression, but also for the entire subversion of the house of David.

It is not unlikely that the king of Israel felt some annoyance that the princes of the house of Judah had reigned in unbroken lineal succession from the time of Rehoboam to Ahaz, while in his kingdom there had been repeated changes of dynasty. But, whatever was the motive of this confederacy, its object was to set aside altogether the seed of David, and establish another person, the son of Tabeal, on the throne of Judah. This plan being directly opposed to God's declared purpose respecting the perpetual reign of the house of David, Isaiah was sent to Ahaz, with a gracious promise, and a prediction of deliverance from the threatened evil. This portion of Holy Scripture is worthy of serious attention, as, while it gave assurance of escape from the imminent calamity to which the house of Judah was exposed, it at the same time cast great light upon the gracious purposes of God with respect to the world, and more particularly as to the meaning of his perpetual covenant with the seed of David.

Isaiah was sent forth to meet Ahaz, and commissioned to charge him not to fear this union of Israel and Syria, assuring him that their purpose should not be brought to pass, and at the same time inviting him to ask a sign of Jehovah, in confirmation of this prediction. This the king, with affected humility, but really through unbelief, declined; upon which the prophet rebuked his obstinacy, and immediately gave forth the memorable prophecy, "A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah vii, 14. (See *Appendix*, note 89.)

The message, however, was lost upon Ahaz; for, although the united army was compelled to raise the siege of Jerusalem, (2 Kings xvi, 5,) yet he would not rely upon the promise of Jehovah, but sent an embassy to the king of Assyria, with a great present of gold and silver, taken from the house of the Lord. By these messengers Ahaz acknowledged himself subject to the throne of Nineveh, and requested the king to save him from the power of Syria and Israel; a request which was so far complied with, that the Assyrian monarch marched upon Damascus, and took and carried away the

inhabitants captive to Kir. This measure, although it gave Judah temporary relief, afforded it no ultimate advantage. Ahab went to Damascus to meet the victorious king, and found that he had only changed difficulties; for the terms under which he was subjected to Assyria were so galling, that we are told the king of that country "distressed him, but strengthened him not." 2 Chron. xxviii, 20.

This disappointment had no salutary effect on the mind of Ahaz. For, instead of seeing the iniquity of his conduct, and the absurdity of the course of policy upon which he had entered, he plunged yet deeper into sin. He should have seen that Israel, strong in the Lord, was called to "dwell alone," relying not on the combined strength of nations, but on the covenant of Jehovah. The reverse of this, however, was the case; for when he saw an altar at Damascus, he copied it, and sent the pattern of it to Urijah the priest, that a similar one might be erected in Jerusalem by the time he should return. The object of this conduct, and its fearful consequences, are stated by the sacred writer: "Ahaz said, I will seek after the gods of Damascus that smite me. And he said, Forasmuch as the gods of the kings of Syria themselves strengthen them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, and they will help me. But they became a stumbling-block to him, and to all Israel." 2 Chron. xxviii, 23.—*Septuagint*. This unhallowed purpose was zealously carried out; for he cut up the sacred vessels of the house of the Lord, and shut up its doors; and, instead of its services, he built altars in every corner of Jerusalem, and in every city of Judah. 2 Kings xvi, 15–18.

It is scarcely possible for us to realize the full extent of this iniquity, and the influence of the mighty agencies employed to counteract it. Here we see an apostate king shutting up the temple of God, interdicting his holy worship, and giving the whole weight of his influence and authority to the establishment of idolatry; and this on the very spot which Jehovah had consecrated as his dwelling-place, before the altar on which the heavenly fire had descended! On the other hand, we behold an agency brought into operation, such as had never before urged the claims of God upon sinful man:—Isaiah, with his mighty intellect, noble genius, and poetic fire, and a soul lit up with an inspiration which ranged through future ages, and seemed to fathom the unsearchable riches of redeeming grace:—Micah, who, condensing the elaborate predictions of his more distinguished contemporary, reproved the sins of his people with equal spirit, energy, and fidelity:—Hosea, who had his whole spirit absorbed in the religious destiny of his people, decried their obstinate disobedience, foretold the heavy judgments to which they stood exposed, and announced their final conversion and restoration.

The violent and long-continued conflict between these agencies must have affected the religious character of the people in a manner the most extraordinary. The few who were devoted to God occasionally assembled for spiritual worship in "every dwelling-place of Mount Zion," (Isaiah iv, 5,) on whom the Divine Glory rested, and who fully trusted in the Lord; while the masses were led away by the ungodly and idolatrous influence of the age. These were trophies of the most vigorous efforts which grace had ever put forth in our world prior to the advent of the Saviour; but in vain: iniquity prevailed. (See *Appendix*, note 90.)

Ahaz was succeeded by Hezekiah, under whose reign a transient gleam of religious prosperity passed over the kingdom. This sovereign, who came to the throne when twenty-five years old, immediately set himself to reform the abuses which had been introduced into the religion of the country. He at once opened the temple, which had been closed by the order of his father, and, having gathered together the priests and Levites, pointed out to them, in a brief, but forcible address, the ruinous consequences which had resulted to the country from the apostasy of his predecessor and his counselors, and avowed his own determination to renew the national covenant with Jehovah. A large number of the priests and Levites responded to his call, and were immediately directed to cleanse the temple. As the holy place was not fully prepared for worship until the sixteenth day of the first month, the celebration of the passover was deferred until the fourteenth day of the second month, when it was observed with unusual devotion and joy. On this occasion Hezekiah sent messengers throughout all Israel, not confining his invitation to his own subjects, but specially calling on the remnant of the kingdom of Israel to participate in the sacred ordinance. When his message was delivered throughout Ephraim, Manasseh, and Zebulun, although the persons who conveyed it were by many laughed to scorn, yet, from these and other neighboring tribes, "there assembled much people to keep the feast." 2 Chron. xxx, 13. Many of these were not purified according to the requirement of the law; but Hezekiah prayed for them, and the Lord heard him. Not satisfied with the appointed seven days of the feast, the people kept other seven days; and, while thus occupied, the Levites availed themselves of the opportunity, and taught the people "the good knowledge of the Lord." Verse 22. Nothing like this had been seen in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon. For now, not only were most, if not all, of the tribes represented at this feast, but they entered upon a course of piety with a spirit and devotion to which Jerusalem had for many years been a stranger.

With this religious reformation the king began to adopt severe measures against idolatry. "He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves," 2 Kings xviii, 4; thus taking away those incentives to that crime which had led the people astray.

In thus exterminating idolatry, Hezekiah met with one case which strikingly illustrates the insidious progress of this enormous evil. The brazen serpent, made in the wilderness by Moses, had been preserved; and the people, not satisfied with treating it as a memorial of the Divine goodness, had manifested towards it idolatrous regard, and burned incense before it. Hezekiah, therefore, brake it in pieces, calling it *Nehushtan*. Verse 4. From this single circumstance may be seen the sound views which enlightened and pious Jews entertained, as to the adoration of relics and images. If any material substance was entitled to sacred and reverential respect, it was this brazen serpent. Yet, when it was worshiped instead of God, it was broken in pieces!

Confident in the Divine protection, Hezekiah refused to continue the payment of the tribute which Ahaz had agreed to send to the king of Assyria; and, improving his army, he strengthened his borders on every side, particularly against the Philistines, whom he smote, and from whom he took a district of country. In all these enterprises the Lord was with Hezekiah, and he prospered whithersoever he went.

In the sixth year of his reign Samaria had been taken by the Assyrians. After that event, the passover had been celebrated, and idolatry destroyed. While Hezekiah was thus occupied, the Assyrian army was engaged in the reduction of Syria, and particularly at the siege of Tyre. Having accomplished these objects, Sennacherib, who had succeeded to the throne of Assyria, marched against Judah in the fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah. The military power of the Assyrian was so great, that he took all the frontier cities; and when at Lachish, about twenty miles south-west of Jerusalem, Hezekiah sent to him, humbly acknowledging his fault in not paying the usual tribute, and offering to submit to any demand which might be made upon him. The haughty monarch required, as the price of his forbearance, three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. To raise this enormous sum, Hezekiah had to take all the silver from the house of the Lord, and all the treasure from the king's house, and even to strip off the gold with which the doors and pillars of the temple had been overlaid.

We cannot contemplate this wavering of Hezekiah without regret. He should have trusted in God for help, and he would have been delivered. But even this great contribution procured him only a

short respite. The king of Assyria, shortly after, sent three of his principal officers* to Jerusalem. These men, in a tone of the most lofty arrogance, demanded the unconditional surrender of the city; ridiculing, with unbounded severity, any trust in Egypt or in Jehovah. The officers of Hezekiah heard all this blasphemy in silence, and, rending their clothes, conveyed a report of it to the king, who immediately sent an account of the interview to Isaiah: the prophet returned an answer of peace, assuring the king that his enemy should hear a rumor which would divert him from his present purpose,—that he should return into his own country, and perish there by the sword.

At this critical juncture Hezekiah was taken ill, and the prophet Isaiah was sent unto him with the message, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." 2 Kings xx, 1. Then Hezekiah prayed earnestly unto God, pleaded the integrity of his life, and "wept sore." Verse 3. This very short, but earnest prayer prevailed. Before Isaiah was gone out of the middle court, he was commanded to go again unto the king, and to say unto him, "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy supplication; I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up into the house of Jehovah. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will protect this city. And Hezekiah said, By what sign shall I know that I shall go up into the house of Jehovah? And Isaiah said, This shall be a sign unto thee from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he hath spoken. Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down." 2 Kings xx, 1-10; Isaiah xxxviii, 1-8. Hezekiah poured out his soul in a song of praise, and, at the appointed time, was restored according to the word of the Lord.

While the servants of Sennacherib were on this journey to Jerusalem, he had raised the siege of Lachish, and had invested Libnah; but, hearing that the king of Egypt† was coming to attack him, he broke up his camp at Libnah, to meet his new enemy. This movement arose out of the political circumstances and military policy of the age. Assyria aspired to universal dominion; Judah was now the only independent state in Western Asia. If it fell, there would be no power to intervene between Assyrian aggression and

* Tartan, Rabsaris, and Rab-shakeh are not proper names, but terms of office; the first meaning, "treasurer;" the second, "chief of the eunuchs;" the third, "butler," or, "cup-bearer."

† Universal History, vol. iii, p. 362; and Russell's Connection, vol. iii, p. 435.

Egypt itself. The king of that country, therefore, wisely considering that he had better march and assist Judah, than afterward sustain the war alone, came out with his army for that purpose.

Before Sennacherib left Libnah, he sent messengers to Hezekiah with a letter, in which he repeated all his former reproaches and demands. The king of Judah, having received the document, "went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before Jehovah." 2 Kings xix, 14. Here he prayed earnestly for protection and deliverance, and the Lord heard, and sent Isaiah with an assurance that his prayer was answered. (See *Appendix*, note 91.)

While this was taking place, the Assyrian monarch had marched to meet the king of Egypt: it appears more than probable, that the Egyptian army was defeated. It is certain they were compelled to retire before their enemy to their own country. 'This was the season when Jehovah interposed on behalf of his people, according to his word: "The angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand" men; so that when the proud monarch arose in the morning, he found his mighty host "dead corpses." Verse 35. Upon the ruin of his army the king of Assyria hastily returned to his own land, where he was soon afterward assassinated by his sons. (See *Appendix*, note 92.)

The spiritual agency employed in Jerusalem at this time demands special notice. Let the glorious revelations of Isaiah be read in connection with this history, and some idea may then be formed of the mighty influence employed in this, the last day of their national independence, to induce the seed of Israel to obey God, and to trust in his protection. If those inspired strains of the evangelical prophet, and of his coadjutor Micah, are now constantly referred to as a fountain of living truth by the Church of Christ, how full of freshness and power must such addresses have been, when heard from the lips of these holy men, and when mixed up with constant prophetic allusions to passing events, and repeated miraculous interpositions, wherein God's infinite wisdom and power were abundantly displayed! But, in addition to these, as Hosea had passed away from his scene of labors just as Hezekiah ascended the throne, another man of God was raised up to carry on the great spiritual work. Nahum appears to have been specially appointed to denounce the miserable ruin of Nineveh, and of the Assyrian monarchy. This was about a hundred years after Jonah had been sent on his mission to that great city. The king and the people had then repented: but they afterward returned to their career of sinful idolatry and violence; and although Assyria had been used in the Divine hand to ruin Israel, and to inflict sore chastisement on Judah, it was now destined to merited de-

struction. In this doom special attention is fixed on their proud and blasphemous bearing toward God. Because, on account of the unfaithfulness of that part of God's people, they had been allowed to subdue Israel, they thought they were stronger than Jehovah. But they were soon undeceived. The prophet opens his communication by declaring the glorious attributes of the Lord; and, adapting his language to the case, begins by saying, "God is jealous," &c. Nahum i, 2. He then proceeds, with all the circumstantiality of an historian, to portray the manner and completeness of the ruin of Nineveh. It is scarcely possible to realize anything more striking than the minute and graphic revelations of this seer with respect to the doom of that ancient city. We recommend a careful comparison of the history with this short prophecy. It is one of the most splendid displays of predictive power which is afforded even by Holy Scripture.

Delivered from this imminent danger, Hezekiah allowed himself to be unduly elevated by succeeding prosperity. A circumstance which occurred soon after, exhibited this failing, and called into exercise his latent vanity. Babylon and Media had conspired to throw off the yoke of Assyria, and were greatly encouraged in their attempt by the destruction of the Assyrian army. The former of these kingdoms, hoping to obtain possession of the western provinces of the Assyrian empire, and for the present, at least, desirous of maintaining amicable relations with an important state which had successfully resisted the proud Sennacherib, sent messengers to Hezekiah, for the ostensible purpose of congratulating him on his recovery, and of inquiring into the miracle by which his restoration to health was accompanied. It is more than probable that Hezekiah received these ambassadors in a spirit precisely similar to that which influenced the king who sent them. He heard them very courteously, and exhibited to them all his riches, armor, and treasures of every description.

Immediately afterward, Isaiah was divinely commissioned to go to Hezekiah, and to tell him that all these riches which he had so vain-gloriously shown to the Babylonish ambassadors, should be carried away as spoil into that country; that even his own children should be carried thither as captives, and be subjected to the vilest treatment in that place of bondage. Hezekiah admitted the justice of the Divine sentence, and, with a spirit which appears to betray a selfish narrow-mindedness, rejoiced that these predicted calamities were not to happen in his own time. This king soon after died, and left his throne to his son Manasseh, about twelve years of age.

This prince, on account of his extreme youth, can scarcely be held responsible for the management of the affairs of the kingdom. Yet,

unless he had more energy and influence than is usually possessed by a boy of twelve years, he must have fallen into the hands of very evil-minded counselors. And it seems equally remarkable, that, after his father's pious reign of twenty-nine years, the youthful king should so completely come under the influence of men full of wickedness, or that one so young as he should of himself start with such energy on a sinful course, and pursue it with such reckless avidity.

But, whether by the immediate will of Manasseh, or by that of his counselors, the religious policy of Hezekiah was completely subverted as soon as the new king had ascended the throne. The high places were restored; the altars of Baal and the groves were again raised; even the house of the Lord was desecrated with idolatrous altars; and the worship of all the host of heaven was celebrated in the court of the temple, and a graven image and a grove set up there. (See *Appendix*, note 93.) He also sacrificed his children to Moloch, and carried his evil influence to such fearful lengths, that the sacred writer distinctly states, he "made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the Heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel." 2 Chron. xxxiii, 9. This career of iniquity was not continued without Divine interposition. God spake by his servants the prophets, pointing out the enormity of their sins, and threatening the most fearful judgments as the punishment of their transgressions. These Divine interpositions, however, produced no salutary effect; for "Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another." 2 Kings xxi, 16. This bloodshedding is universally supposed to have been the destruction of the pious worshipers of Jehovah. And it is worthy of remark, that, according to the best authorities, every prophet living at the accession of this wicked prince died in the early part of his reign. This was the case with Isaiah, Micah, and Nahum. The great Jewish antiquarian supports the opinion, that Manasseh cut off those who opposed his idolatrous practices, saying, "He barbarously slew all the righteous men that were among the Hebrews; nor would he spare the prophets, for he every day slew some of them, till Jerusalem was overflowed with blood."—*Josephus's Antiq.*, b. x, ch. 3, sec. 1.

This iniquity seems to have completed the full measure of Jewish transgression. That a nation, which had seen so many wondrous interpositions of the Divine power, should have been unfaithful and disobedient, is surprising. That such a people should deliberately renounce God, and openly practice and support the worship of idols, is marvelous. But that they should add to all this evil a furious and bloody persecution of those who adhered to the truth and worship

of Jehovah, seems to transcend belief. Yet so it was; and we accordingly now find, for the first time, that God denounces utter ruin upon Jerusalem and Judah. 2 Kings xxi, 12-15. A part of this punishment was immediately inflicted; for the host of the king of Assyria came against Jerusalem; the king was taken prisoner, and carried in chains unto Babylon. We have no particulars of this invasion, except the brief notice contained in the sacred record. It is, however, sufficient to show that its effect on the mind of this wicked king was of the most salutary character: "When he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers." 2 Chron. xxxiii, 12. God heard his prayer, interposed on his behalf, and the captive king was restored to his country and his crown. The particulars of this restoration are also buried in oblivion. But we are informed that Manasseh, when again possessed of power, not only diligently applied himself to the affairs of his kingdom, and greatly strengthened the defenses of the capital and other fortified places in his dominions; but that he assiduously labored to reform the religion of his country, and thus to undo the evil which his wicked zeal had, in the early part of his reign, brought upon the land. He was in a great measure successful, as far as outward forms and actions are regarded. The idols were prohibited, the images taken away, the worship of Jehovah restored, and we are told significantly, that, although the high places remained, the people only sacrificed in them to Jehovah. This, although a serious violation of Divine law, was an evil of much less magnitude than idolatry.

Such successive alternations of faith have done much to damage religion in the estimation of superficial readers. It has been inferred that these outward services comprised the great essentials of religion, and that men were good or evil just as they worshiped Jehovah or Baal, although the place and the rites remained just the same; the difference consisting mainly in a change of terms. Those who will be at the pains of reading the prophets, in connection with the history, will be preserved from this delusion. In their sublime and spiritual addresses, we find a merely formal service rejected, and a devotedness of life, a reformation of character, repentance and pardon, constantly insisted on. In fact, although any recognition of idols in worship must be infinitely hateful to God, and although he often turned away his judgments when the people returned to an acknowledgment of his majesty, he has left us, in the inspired pages of prophecy, the most abundant evidence, that nothing less than the spiritual renewal of the heart, and a corresponding and consequent reformation of the life, is acceptable in his sight.

After a long reign of fifty-five years, Manasseh died, and was succeeded by his son Amon, who was twenty-two years of age. This young man, in his short and wicked reign, did his utmost to revive idolatry, and to bring back the evils of the worst part of his father's government. He was, however, assassinated in the second year of his rule. But this was not a popular movement; for, as soon as his death was known, the people slew his murderers, and placed his son, a child of eight years, on the throne.

About this time occurred the invasion of Judah, which is recorded in the apocryphal book of Judith; and which, whatever the precise chronology of the event, appears certainly to have taken place.* On this occasion the Assyrian army was marched into the provinces of western Asia, to punish them for their sympathy with the Median and Babylonish insurrection against the imperial power. Having pursued a successful career hitherto, they invested Bethuliah, where their general was cut off by the policy of Judith, and his mighty host discomfited and routed by a sudden attack made on them by the Jews, who at the onset exhibited the gory head of the Assyrian general. (See *Appendix*, note 94.)

After this victory, which saved the Jewish kingdom from imminent danger, and prepared the way for the ruin of Assyria, this noble woman poured forth her thanksgiving unto God in a hymn of praise, which, for sublimity of idea, chasteness of imagery, and beauty of language, may vie with the most exalted specimens of ancient poetry, even with those of Deborah and Miriam.

The reign of Josiah began auspiciously. He appears to have set himself at once to extirpate idolatry from the land, and to restore and establish the religion of Jehovah. In this work he proceeded with great vigor and success. Having destroyed the images, groves, and high places of Jerusalem, he proceeded to extend this reformation to the other parts of the country; and, anxious to see his orders fully carried into effect, he himself journeyed through the land. Nor did he confine his attention to the limits of the kingdom of Judah: he went through the other tribes, wherever any considerable number of the population remained, and thus carried out his religious reformation even unto Naphtali.

We have in this instance the means of knowing exactly when these efforts began, and how they progressed. In the eighth year of his reign, when sixteen years of age, he began to devote himself to God. After the experience of personal religion during four

* It appears that undue stress has been laid on two or three clauses which refer to the age of Judith, and the undisturbed state of Judah until her death, which are evidently incorrect. Chap. xvi, 23-25.

years, he, at the age of twenty, commenced the reformation of the national religion, which occupied him six years more. Thus did this young sovereign, by following steadily, and with single-mindedness, the teaching of the Holy Spirit, secure to himself the greatest of all blessings,—the Divine favor; and prosecute the greatest of all works,—the removal of error, and the dissemination of pure religion among his people. Having proceeded thus far in pious effort for the benefit of his country, he began to cleanse and repair the temple. During the progress of this work, the high priest found the “book of the law in the house of the Lord,” 2 Kings xxii, 8; or, as it is given in the parallel place, “a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses.” 2 Chron. xxxiv, 14. This fact is one of great interest and importance, for two reasons: First, as it has been used by the enemies of revelation for the purpose of attempting to show that the books of Moses, as we now have them, are not authentic; and, secondly, as this fact was the cause of Josiah’s receiving special and important revelations from Jehovah.

With respect to the first particular, it cannot be supposed that this “book” was the entire law of Moses, or, as we should call it, the Pentateuch. For, not to mention other reasons, only a few years previously, in the reign of Jehoshaphat, the book of the law was so well known, that itinerant ministers were sent throughout the country to teach the people, it being taken with each, that the teaching might always be sustained by Divine authority. Nor is it probable, notwithstanding the frequent prevalence of idolatry, as books of the law were common in the days of Jehoshaphat, that they should have been all destroyed before the accession of Josiah. It is as easy to conceive of the religion of England being maintained in its present state without a copy of the Scriptures, as that Hezekiah should have reformed the religion of his country, and have lived and reigned so piously, without a copy of the law. When the peculiar ritual service and extensive ceremonial of the Pentateuch are considered, the impossibility of this will be admitted. We have another such case in Josiah. “He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.” 2 Kings xxii, 2. How could he have discovered this way? How could he have conformed to the way of David? Certainly by no other means than by a study of the Divine law. It is, in fact, utterly incredible that the several religious reformations which took place from the reign of Rehoboam to that of Josiah, could have been effected without a copy of the Pentateuch. It is equally beyond belief that a continued series of holy prophets should all have remained

strangers to the sacred writings of Moses. Had not Isaiah read the law ?

If it be urged that the inspired writer gives this as a fact, we reply, It is stated that " a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses " was found. 2 Chron. xxxiv, 14. But this statement is made in a manner which not only does not say that this was the whole Pentateuch, and that no other copy was known, but intimates the very reverse. If this had been the whole Pentateuch, its perusal would have occupied considerable time, and a great portion of it must have been read before any threatening could have alarmed the king. Yet the account states that " Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me *a book*. And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes." Verses 18, 19. What passage in Genesis or Exodus could have produced this effect? Yet the impression appears to have been made by the perusal of this book, and that almost immediately. If we are expected to offer a solution of this difficulty, it is sufficient to observe, that, although the writings of Moses had been carefully copied and preserved, public attention was mostly confined to the historical and ceremonial parts. If, then, a portion of Deuteronomy should have been found in a place and manner which warranted the opinion that it was the autograph writing of the lawgiver, all the difficulties vanish, and the whole account appears to be easy and natural. We think such was the case ; and agree with Dr. Adam Clarke, that " the simple fact seems to be this : that this book was the original of the covenant renewed by Moses with the people in the plains of Moab, and which he ordered to be laid up beside the ark, Deut. xxxi, 26 ; and now being unexpectedly found, its antiquity, the occasion of its being made, the present circumstances of the people, the imperfect state in which the reformation was as yet, after all that had been done, would all concur to produce the effect here mentioned on the mind of the pious Josiah." —*Commentary*. Whether this conjecture be perfectly sound or not, no reason whatever exists for the infidel theories which have been raised on this circumstance.

But this incident led Josiah to a clearer acquaintance with the purposes of Jehovah respecting his country than he had hitherto obtained. Having heard the alarming threatenings which God by his servant Moses had predictively set forth, he was anxious to have further information on the subject. He therefore sent messengers to Huldah, a prophetess, to inquire into the meaning and application of the severe terms contained in this book which had been found. It has been the subject of frequent remark, that the king should

have consulted a woman on this most important occasion. Josiah certainly had able counselors, both in the priesthood and among the laity; but not one of them professed to have the power of giving authorized solutions to questions of this kind. And it is very creditable to the judgment of the king, and to the candor of his council, that inquiry was made of a woman, who was known to be thus specially endowed. The answer given was clear and full: the king was distinctly told, that the people had by their sins exposed themselves to the fearful weight of these maledictions, and that it should certainly fall upon them; but that, as Josiah had faithfully devoted himself to God, he should not witness these calamities, but die in peace.

One of the most difficult and perplexing obstacles to our fully understanding this part of sacred history, arises from the impossibility of ascertaining when, and to what extent, the written prophecies were published. Isaiah was dead before Josiah came to the throne. His prophecies clearly announce, not only the ruin of Assyria by nations which in his time were but subject and tributary states, but the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and the restoration of a remnant of the people. Cyrus is even mentioned by name twice, as contributing to this restoration. It may be readily admitted, that unfulfilled prophecy would appear dark and enigmatical; but the explicit declaration of God, by the mouth of this prophet, must have been known at the time, and would scarcely have been forgotten. This was again repeated by Huldah. It thus became fully impressed upon the public mind, that the national sin had involved them in national ruin.

Josiah, encouraged by the promise which accompanied this inspired communication, proceeded with renewed zeal in the work of religious reformation. And the account which is given of his labors and success affords mournful evidence that Jerusalem had fallen, not only into the most infamous idolatry, but that all its concomitant evils had obtained a frightful extent of power and influence. 2 Kings xxiii. In the prosecution of this good work, the monarch fulfilled the prediction of the man of God, by polluting the altar at Bethel. He seems to have surpassed all his predecessors in his zeal for Jehovah. It would cast great light on the state of religion, if we had the means of showing how far a sincere and godly spiritual-mindedness and worship accompanied this external reformation. To a mind enlightened by the Holy Ghost, nothing is more painful than to see the constant recurrence of relapse and reformation, as it would appear from the record, according to the will or inclination of the sovereign; as if religion was a subject in which

the people took but little interest. It is, indeed, certain, that the manners, habits, and general character of the population had become awfully depraved; that idolatry, whether luxuriating in royal favor, or fostered in silence, was rooted in the public mind, and, consequently, the nation was doomed to political ruin, and the people to a painful captivity, as the only means of cure.

Josiah, having completed his efforts to improve the religious condition of his people, and celebrated a passover with unusual liberality and piety, was turned from the concerns of domestic policy to the excitement and dangers of war.

The king of Egypt, aware that the sovereign of Assyria was fully occupied with his rebellious vassals, the Babylonians and Medes, took advantage of this opportunity to attempt the reduction of Carchemish, a frontier town on the Euphrates. From the route taken, it appears probable that the Egyptian army was brought by sea to Cesarea, which would greatly shorten their journey. (See *Appendix*, note 95.) When the army reached Megiddo, on the edge of the plain of Esdraelon, Josiah marched out to oppose the progress of the expedition. Some obscurity hangs over the motives of the pious king in this particular, as it is very evident that the Egyptian rather avoided than provoked the engagement. The king of Judah was inflexible; and in the battle which ensued he was slain, or, at least, so dangerously wounded that he was taken in his chariot to Jerusalem, where he died, and was buried in the sepulchres of his fathers.

This melancholy event brings us to the last generation of the kings of Judah. Josiah left three sons, each of whom was successively raised to the throne; the monarchy terminating with the reign of Zedekiah, the last of the three brothers. During the reign of Josiah, God raised up Jeremiah to minister his prophetic truth to the kingdom of Judah, in the great crisis of their history. He was called to this ministry in the thirteenth year of this reign. The first twelve chapters of his prophecy are supposed to have been written during the reign of Josiah.

These chapters cast considerable light upon the religious state of the people of Jerusalem, at a time when the worship of Jehovah was maintained with all the authority of the crown, and idolatry was punished with death. If any proof were necessary to show that God required a spiritual and real, in opposition to a ceremonial and formal devotion, it is given in these inspired communications. It was a season of external religious prosperity. Yet now God expostulates with his people, on account of their disobedience, and denounces their entire ruin, on account of their sin. The seventh

chapter may be referred to, as affording decisive evidence on this point. The prophet was commanded to take his station at the gate of the temple, and to speak to those who went in and out of the sacred edifice. The persons addressed, therefore, were those who outwardly conformed to the service and worship of Jehovah. Nay, more: they are said to trust in lying words; by which they believed that they stood so associated with the temple of the Lord, as to share in its stability and safety,—showing that false teachers then taught this fallacious ground of confidence, and that these persons relied upon it. Yet they are convicted of every enormous crime: the catalogue of their injustice and vices is frightful; and, as if this was not enough, the prophet adds a fearful description of their private idolatries. These wicked people are then reminded of God's oft-repeated interposition on their behalf, and the privileges they had enjoyed through the continued ministrations of the prophets, all which had been slighted and abused; for this he threatens them with imminent and utter ruin: an event that was hastened by the death of the sovereign.

Josiah was succeeded by his son, Jehoahaz, whom the people made king in preference to his elder brother. He began his reign in crime, and proceeded to do evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done. But his reign was short. The king of Egypt, returning from his Assyrian expedition, met him at Riblah, where he put him in fetters; and, appointing his elder brother, Eliakim, to be king of Judah, he carried the deposed monarch into Egypt, where he died; thus fulfilling the prediction of the prophet. Jer. xxii, 10–12. On this occasion Pharaoh-Necho laid a heavy demand on the Jewish king, to raise which he was compelled to levy a tax on the land, by which means he exacted a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. Having changed the name of this king into Jehoiakim, to show his supremacy, Necho returned to Egypt. But this king, also, did evil in the sight of the Lord. His character is portrayed by the hand of a master in the prophecy of Jeremiah. Verses 13–19. Reigning as the deputy of the king of Egypt, he seems to have thrown off all fear of God; and, having satisfied the cupidity of his master at the expense of his people, he plunged recklessly into all evil. According to the declaration of the prophet to which we have referred, truly God did not leave himself without a witness to his power and truth. But while the sensual and wicked king of Judah was trusting in the power of Egypt, and living at ease in his sin, events were taking place in the east of Asia which were destined soon to effect an entire alteration in the international policy of the West.

Two years after the return of Pharaoh from Carchemish, the united Median and Babylonian army succeeded in destroying Nineveh; after which the countries that had been subject to the Assyrian empire were divided between these two powers. By this division, all the countries in Asia to the west of the Euphrates were allotted to Babylon. But before the subversion of the Assyrian empire, when Nineveh was closely invested, the Chaldean king sent his warlike son, Nebuchadnezzar, into Western Asia, with a powerful army, to bring all the provinces formerly subject to Assyria under his dominion. On this occasion Jehoiakim became tributary to Babylon, and continued so for three years; when, in all probability, incited by the king of Egypt, who was preparing to make a second expedition to Carchemish, he rebelled; but the effort was vain: the Egyptian army was defeated at Carchemish, (Jer. xlv, 2,) and hastily retreated to their own land, from which they dared to march against Babylon no more. The hapless king of Judah was, therefore, abandoned to his fate, when Nebuchadnezzar soon afterward appeared before Jerusalem. Pending these events, Jehoiakim died, and his son, Jehoiachin, assumed the sovereignty, and set himself upon an evil course of action; but he had held the sceptre only three months, when he was compelled to surrender his capital and himself to the victorious Nebuchadnezzar. 2 Kings xxiv, 12-16.

This was really the termination of the kingdom of Judah. All its wealth, the royal family, and princes; all the mighty men, even the best artisans, and many thousands of other captives, were carried away into captivity.

The Babylonish chief, having taken away the king, appointed his uncle, the only remaining son of Josiah, to succeed him as the vassal of Babylon; for he "made him swear by God" to be faithful to the Chaldean power. Zedekiah governed in this subordinate character for several years. But, during this time, he also did evil in the sight of the Lord; and it is emphatically said of him, by the inspired writer, that he "humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord." 2 Chron. xxxvi, 12. Not only was his general course of life and policy opposed to the earnest and continued teaching and protestation of the prophet, but, at length, the king resolved, in defiance of his most urgent advice, to trust again in "the broken reed," Egypt, and therefore violated his oath of allegiance, and rebelled against Babylon. This measure brought Nebuchadnezzar and his army again to Jerusalem; when the king of Egypt ostensibly prepared to succor those who had ventured so much on the faith of his promise. But Nebuchadnezzar raised the siege, and promptly marched to meet the Egyptian army.

Now were verified the explicit predictions of Jeremiah; for, without hazarding a battle, the Egyptians basely retired to their own country, and left their allies to their fate. The Chaldean army, therefore, returned to Jerusalem, more wrathful and determined than ever. In this emergency the king of Judah sent for Jeremiah, who assured him, from the Lord, that the ruin of the Jewish polity was determined; that Jerusalem was given into the hands of the king of Babylon; but that those who submitted to him should preserve their lives. The communication of this intelligence subjected the prophet to severe ill-treatment. At length the power of the enemy without, and the pressure of famine within, prevailed,—Jerusalem fell prostrate into the hands of the conqueror. Zedekiah fled by night; but was taken in the plains of Jericho, and brought into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah. After reproaching him with his breach of faith, the Chaldean king slew his sons in his presence; and then, having put out his eyes, sent him to Babylon; thus fulfilling two prophecies which appeared to contradict each other. Jeremiah had said that “his eyes should see the eyes of the king of Babylon.” Chap. xxxii, 4; xxxiv, 3. And Ezekiel had also predicted of him, “I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.” Chap. xii, 13. How strikingly is the prescience of God manifested to men, in such predictions as these!

Now the ruin of Jerusalem was complete. The temple, the palace, the splendid houses of the Jewish aristocracy, were all pillaged and burned. Everything worth the cost of transit was sent to Babylon. All the families of consequence throughout the land were carried thither, and none left but a few husbandmen and vine-dressers, to afford a semi-cultivation to the soil.

The mind shrinks from the contemplation of a catastrophe like this. Zion, the seat of kingly power, the earthly dwelling-place of Jehovah, spoiled, desecrated, and trampled under foot by the Heathen! Why is this? Where is the malign, the potent cause? It is visible to the eye: it is present to the sense. *Sin* expelled angels from a heaven of glory; sin buried a world beneath a flood of waters; sin, persevering, obstinate, incorrigible sin, despoiled Salem of her beauty, and wrote *Ichabod* upon her charred walls and blasted soil.

It is necessary now to say a word concerning the chronology of this period: perhaps no part of Scripture history has, in this respect, presented greater difficulties. It has, says Dr. Hales, been considered “the Gordian knot of sacred chronology.” Our own inclination would have been gratified in attempting to unravel these, in

the course of the narrative. But, whether this were done in the text, or in notes, it must necessarily have caused so much interruption, and made so many inconvenient breaks in the history, that it has been judged most desirable to substitute, instead of such verbal elucidations, the accompanying chronological table, compiled from the highest authorities; which will, at a glance, afford the best attainable information on this abstruse subject; and, at the same time, constitute a tabular harmony of the history and religion of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

A SYNCHRONISTICAL TABLE OF REMARKABLE EVENTS IN THE KINGDOMS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

<i>Kingdom of Judah.</i>	<i>B.C.</i>	<i>Ministration of Prophets.</i>	<i>Kingdom of Israel.</i>	<i>B.C.</i>
REHOBOAM succeeds to the Throne (reigned 17 years)....	979	Shemaiab, and the Man of God who was sent to Bethel, in Judah. And Ahijah the Shilonite in Israel, who exercises his Ministry from B.C. 975, to B.C. 950.	JEROBOAM reigns over the revolted Tribes (reigned 22 years)	979
— reigns righteously, desists from making War with Israel at the command of God by his Prophet.....	—		— establishes an idolatrous Worship at Bethel.....	—
— afterward relapses into Idolatry, and Jerusalem with him	975		— is rebuked, punished, and healed, at the Word of a Man of God, who is himself slain for Disobedience.....	—
— Jerusalem taken and spoiled by Shishak	974		The Priests and Levites repair to Jerusalem	978
ABIJAH succeeds his Father on the Throne (3 years).....	962			
— obtains a great Victory over Jeroboam	961		Israel defeated by Abijah with the loss of 500,000 Men	961
ASA, Son of Abijah, reigns righteously	959		Bethel and other Towns taken from Israel and united to Judah.	—
— suppresses Idolatry, and builds fortified Cities.....	954		NADAB reigns, following in the Steps of his Father (2 years). ..	957
Jehoshaphat born.....	952		BAASHA, Son of Ahijah, kills Nadab, and reigns in his stead (24 years)	955
— trusting in God, defeats Zerah and his immense Host... ..	944		— invades Judah, but compelled to retire by Benhadad..	941
— forms an irreligious Alliance with Benhadad.....	941	Azariah, B.C. 944. Hanani the Seer, 943. Jehu, the Son of Hanani, prophesies 42 years, from B.C. 933, to B.C. 891.	ELAH succeeds his Father and reigns (2 years).....	938
Jehu the Prophet warns Baasha, and predicts the Destruction of his House	933	Elijah exercises the prophetic Ministry, from B.C. 900, to B.C. 875, fifteen years. Elisha succeeds Elijah as Prophet, and ministers fifty-nine years from B.C. 875. Jonah prophesies. Joel.	ZIMRI kills Elah, and extirpates the House of Baasha (7 days)	931
ASA imprisons Hanani the Seer for having reprov'd him	920		OMRI defeats and destroys Zimri, and reigns (12 years).....	—
JEHOSHAPHAT, the Son of Asa, reigns (25 years)	928		Half the People rally round Tibni, and make him King: he contends with Omri five years, and dies	926
— sends Princes, Priests, and Levites to teach the People..	915		AHAB, the Son of Omri, reigns wickedly (22 years).....	909
— is reprov'd by Jehu for making an Alliance with Ahab	899		Elijah foretells the Famine of three years and a half	900
JEHORAM succeeds his Father (8 years).....	893		Sacrifice on Carmel, and Destruction of Priests of Baal...	896
The Philistines and Arabians ravage Judah, spoil the King's House, and slay all his Sons except one.....	887		Samaria besieged and delivered	881
AHAZIAH, the Son of Jehoram, reigns (1 year)	885		Death of Naboth.....	880
ATHALIAH, when Ahaziah was slain by Jehu, usurps the Crown	884		AHAZIAH succeeds to the Throne, and reigns (2 years).....	887
JOASH placed on the Throne by the High Priest, and Athaliah slain (40 years).....	878		JORAM succeeds his Father Ahaziah (12 years)	885
— having reigned well thirty years, he lapses into Idolatry	848		Moab subdued. Elijah multiplies the Widow's Oil	888
AMAZIAH, Son of Joash, avenges his Father's Death (29 years)	838		The Famine in Samaria.....	880
— conquers the Edomites, being reprov'd, he threatens the Prophet	835		Jehu, the Son of Nimshi, having slain Joram, reigns (28 years)	883
			Hazeel oppresses Israel.....	886
			JEHOAHAZ, Son of Jehu, reigns wickedly (17 years).....	885

<i>Kingdom of Judah.</i>	<i>B.C.</i>	<i>Ministration of Prophets.</i>	<i>Kingdom of Israel.</i>	<i>B.C.</i>
UZZIAH succeeds his Father (52 years)	809	Amos begins to prophesy, B.C. 786.	JEHOASH succeeds his Father..	838
— the King is stricken with Leprosy.....	763		— takes Amaziah Prisoner and spoils the Temple	823
JOTHAM reigns righteously (16 years).....	757	Isaiah begins to prophesy, B.C. 759.	JEROBOAM II. ascends the Throne on the Death of his Father (41 years)	822
The Kings of Syria and Israel invade Judah	742		Damascus and Hamath taken..	782
AHAZ ascends the Throne and restores Idolatry (16 years)...	741	Micah begins to prophesy, B.C. 748.	INTERREGNUM after the Death of Jeroboam (11 years)	781
— obtains the Aid of the King of Assyria against the Edomites	738		ZECHARIAH reigns 6 months ...	770
HEZEKIAH succeeds his Father Ahaz (29 years)	725	Nahum.	SHALLUM reigns 1 month.....	770
— restores the Worship of God—Destroys Idolatry.....	—		Menahem ascends the Throne (10 years).....	769
— is greatly blessed with Prosperity.....	—		PEKAHIAH, Son of Menahem, reigns (2 years).....	759
Sennacherib invades Judah	681	Isaiah, Micah, and Nahum, prophesy until the Accession of Manasseh.	Pekah, Son of Remaliah, reigns (20 years).....	757
— again invades Judah.....	680		— defeats Ahaz with great Slaughter, and, forming an Alliance with Syria, threatens to ruin the House of David..	738
—'s Army miraculously destroyed	679		Interregnum (2d) (9 years).....	737
MANASSEH ascends the Throne on the Death of his Father (55 years)	696		Hoshea reigns nine years.....	728
— restores Idolatry, profanes the Temple, and sacrifices his Children to Moloch.....	—		Samaria taken and destroyed, and the People being carried into Captivity, the Kingdom of Israel is subverted.....	711
Holofernes, invading Judah, is slain by Judith about.....	652			
AMON succeeds his Father (2 years).....	641			
— reigns wickedly, and is slain by his Servants.....	639			
JOSIAH ascends the throne and reigns piously	639			
— restores the religion of Jehovah	—	Zephaniah.		
— endeavors to destroy Idolatry	627	Jeremiah begins to prophesy, B.C. 626.		
Temple repaired, and Religion further reformed	621			
JEHOAHAZ succeeds his Father, who was slain at Megiddo; he reigns 3 months	—			
JEOIAKIM placed on the Throne by the King of Egypt (11 years)	609			
Jerusalem taken by Nebuchadnezzar, the King restored to the Throne as the Vassal of Babylon.....	603	Habakkuk.		
Jehoiakim rebels after three years	600			
JEOIACHIN succeeds his Father (3 months 10 days).....	—	Daniel begins to prophesy, B.C. 600.		
ZEDERIAH. Nebuchadnezzar having deposed Jehoiachin and sent him to Babylon, places the only remaining Son of Josiah on the Throne of Judah as his Vassal (11 years).....	597			
— rebels, and is subdued, Jerusalem and the Kingdom subverted and destroyed.....	586	Ezekiel begins to prophesy, B.C. 591.		
		Obadiah prophesies.		

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF THE HEBREWS DURING THE CAPTIVITY.

PECULIAR CONDITION OF THE HEBREWS AT THIS PERIOD—The several Deportations of Hebrews to the East—Gedaliah appointed Governor—He is slain, and the Remnant of Hebrews emigrate to Egypt—The Prophecies and Death of Jeremiah—Nebuchadnezzar's first Dream, declared and interpreted by Daniel—The Prophet is promoted to be Chief of the Wise Men—The Hebrews in their Captivity were treated with Tolerance and Liberality—The golden Image—The Deliverance of the three Hebrews—Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Tree—The Dream explained—And fulfilled—The Insanity of the King—His Death—Evil-Merodach succeeds to the Throne of Babylon—He delivers Jehoiachin from Prison, and honors him—Belshazzar succeeds to the Throne—His Feast—The Handwriting on the Wall—Explained by Daniel—Belshazzar's Death—A Remarkable Fulfillment of Prophecy—Accession of Darius to the Throne of Babylon—Daniel his Minister—The Edict forbidding Prayer to God—Daniel in the Den of Lions—Is delivered—His deep Interest in the Religion of his People—Receives special Revelations from Heaven—Preparation of the People for Restoration—The Accession of Cyrus—His Decree—First Caravan of Hebrews return to Judea—The Altar of Burnt-offering restored—Foundation of the Temple laid—Opposition of the Samaritans—The Progress of the Building forbidden—Darius Hystaspes reigns—The Building resumed—The Temple finished—Ezra sent to Jerusalem—His Labors and Reforms—Nehemiah appointed Governor of Jerusalem—The Walls of the City built—Several religious and social Reforms effected—Nehemiah goes to Babylon—And returns to Jerusalem—He again removes Disorder, and effects a social and religious Reformation—The History of Esther—Her Influence upon the Welfare of the Jews—Chronological Table.

THE condition of the Hebrews, in this part of their history, presents an entirely new aspect. From the period of the first elevation of the Israelites into the position of a separate and independent people, to the captivity, they had, in all the fluctuations of their public affairs, to a great degree retained the power of self-government, and the possession of the soil. Now, however, they were doomed to a condition the most abject and painful. We behold them not only completely subdued, and placed under the government of their tyrant conquerors, but deported from their own country, and, after a long and harassing journey, scattered through a strange land, to live as exiles and captives in the midst of a Heathen and dominant people.

This captivity must not, however, be regarded as having its commencement and accomplishment in the capture and destruction of Jerusalem. It may not improperly be observed, that, after the subversion of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the scattered remnant of all the tribes were regarded as one people.* The captivity,

* We have a striking proof of this in the Book of Esther, in which all the Jews throughout the one hundred and twenty provinces of the Persian empire are placed on the same footing, and have the same privilege. Esther ix, 9-12, &c.

therefore, in its widest sense, began when the transjordanic tribes, together with those of Zebulon and Naphtali, were carried away into Assyria. 2 Kings xv, 29. This occurred about B.C. 740. Another deportation took place about twenty years afterward, when Samaria was taken, and the king, and all the most important of the remaining population of the ten tribes, were also carried away into Assyria.

It was a hundred years after the ruin of the kingdom of Israel, that the land of Judah was subjected to similar calamities. But the number and date of the several deportations from this part of the Hebrew family is not so easily ascertained. Two of these are described in the Book of Kings; Jeremiah speaks of three; and Daniel of a fourth.

The first, in the order of time, is that mentioned by Daniel, who states (chap. i, 1) that, "in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah," Nebuchadnezzar besieged and took Jerusalem, and carried away the vessels of the Lord's house, and several young members of the royal family and of the nobility, to Babylon. These captives, as they appear to have been few in number, may be regarded rather as hostages than a part of the national captivity. (See *Appendix*, note 96.)

The second transportation from the kingdom of Judah into Chaldea was in the year B.C. 598, when Nebuchadnezzar deposed Jehoiachin, and took him, and great numbers of the people, into captivity. The object of this deportation appears to have been to augment his armies, and to provide useful inhabitants for some newly-built or recently-conquered towns: for he took away "all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths." 2 Kings xxiv, 14.

The next compulsory emigration of Hebrews to Babylonia was on the capture and destruction of Jerusalem, when Zedekiah was taken, and punished by Nebuchadnezzar. This, as we have already seen, occurred about B.C. 586; and on this occasion the great body of the Jewish nation was transferred to Chaldea.

Jeremiah adds another deportation, which, he says, occurred five years after the last mentioned one. But of this we have no other information; and it is very probable, as indeed the prophet intimates, that this affected but a small number of persons.

Before we proceed with the history of the expatriated captives, it will be necessary to convey some information respecting the remnant which was left in the land.

Nebuchadnezzar, having executed his purpose on the Jewish nation by the entire ruin of the capital, and the total subversion of

the state, selected Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, and appointed him governor over the land. As far as our information extends, the appointment was judicious: Ahikam appears to have held an important position at the court of king Josiah. 2 Kings xxii, 12. He also possessed sufficient influence in the reign of Jehoiakim to protect Jeremiah from the cruelty of the king, and the violence of the people. Jer. xxvi, 24. Gedaliah fixed his residence at Mizpah, and proceeded to organize a government, inviting the people to settle down in subjection to the king of Babylon. Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard, also delivered Jeremiah to the governor, giving him his choice, either to remain with Gedaliah in Judea, or to accompany the captain of the guard to Babylon. The prophet preferred remaining with his friend. Great numbers of the Jews also, who had, during the war, fled for refuge into neighboring countries, returned when they heard that Gedaliah was made governor at Mizpah. Several of the chiefs, with their men, followed this example, and came to the seat of government. To them the governor gave the most positive assurances of safety. But while these circumstances seemed to promise peace and comfort in the land of their fathers to the remnant that had escaped the sword and banishment, all these prospects were blasted by the assassination of Gedaliah.

This noble-minded man had been forewarned of the designs of Ishmael; but his generous spirit refused to believe the insinuation. At length the wicked purpose was effected; the governor was slain, and the assassin, having also cut off the Jews and Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah, attempted to carry away the captives, the king's daughters, and the residue of the people, into the land of the Ammonites, with whose king Ishmael was in league.

Johanan and other captains, who collected their men, and pursued the fugitives, succeeded in preventing this; for, having overtaken the party, all the people were recovered; Ishmael, with only eight attendants, effecting his escape. Alarmed, and apprehensive lest the Chaldeans would punish them for this massacre, Johanan and the rest of the people determined to flee into Egypt. Against this purpose Jeremiah lifted up his voice with more than his usual energy. But, having their own object in view, the chiefs who had recovered the captives from Ishmael, taking all the people with them, left Mizpah, and went to Chimham, near Bethlehem, that they might more conveniently carry their purpose into effect. While residing here, they made a formal application to Jeremiah, that he would pray for them, that they might be told what they should do, and where they should locate; pledging themselves to act accord-

ing to his word, whether it agreed with their inclinations or not. Ten days after this, the prophet called the chiefs and all the people together, and delivered unto them one of the most remarkable addresses which Holy Scripture contains. Jer. xlii. He first assured all the people that if they would abide in the land, and trust in God, they should be saved from the wrath of the king of Babylon, and be built up and made prosperous; declaring unto them that this was the will of God. He then proceeded to affirm that if, in disobedience to the Divine will, they fled to Egypt, all the evils which they apprehended,—the sword, pestilence, and famine,—should come upon them there; so that none of them should escape. He then predicted the most frightful evils as impending over Egypt, and over them, if they were disobedient; and earnestly admonished them to remain in their own land.

All this faithful and divinely inspired remonstrance was, however, ineffectual: the chiefs, who had paramount influence over this remnant of people, proudly resisted the word of the prophet, denied that he spake from God, and at once marched down to Egypt. Having reached Tahpanhes, in Lower Egypt, they dwelt there: and here again the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, and he once more predicted the certain conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, and the total ruin of the Jewish fugitives in the war. In this prophecy he dwelt with great force on the continued idolatry of Israel, showed that it had been the cause of all their past suffering, and that it would certainly lead to their ruin. This last faithful declaration of the Divine will excited the wicked people to ungovernable wrath. Although, actuated by the purest patriotism, this holy man had only lived to labor for his country, and, while devoting his life to instruct and reclaim them, had shared all their dangers and sufferings; yet, when he thus predicted the consequences of their sin, the infatuated people stoned him to death, and cast his body into a pit. It will be sufficient here to observe, that all these prophecies were soon fully realized in the sufferings of these guilty men.

We may now return to the much larger and more important section of the people which had been transported to Chaldea. Of these, first in order our attention is called to Daniel and his companions, those young branches of the noble houses of Judah who had been carried away as hostages in the reign of Jehoiakim. Daniel informs us that himself, and three others, were selected to be taught all the learning of the Chaldeans, that they might be prepared to take a place among the wise men of Babylon. A bountiful supply of provision was supplied them from the royal stores; but these pious youths, preferring a rigid adherence to the law, obtained the consent

of the officer who had the charge of them to confine themselves to vegetables and water.

These young Hebrews were as eminent for piety, as for devotedness to their studies. God therefore greatly blessed them, and "gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom." Dan. i, 17. Three years was the time allotted for their educational probation; and at the end of this period, when examined as to their attainments, they were found much superior to "all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Verse 20.

After this time had expired, and these young men had been enrolled among the magi of the court, Nebuchadnezzar had a remarkable dream; which made such an impression on his mind, that he felt exceedingly unhappy. (See *Appendix*, note 97. Yet, although sorely troubled, he did not remember the particulars of the vision so as to give an account of it. He therefore called together the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans, and required them to tell him his dream, and show him its interpretation. This they all declared to be impossible: upon which, the disappointed king, in a rage, ordered the whole company to be put to death. While preparing for this execution, Daniel and his friends were sought, as they were included in the condemnation. This circumstance indicates that they were not present in the first instance. Probably, being young, and captive Hebrews, they were, notwithstanding their wisdom, not highly esteemed by their superiors in rank. In this emergency, Daniel obtained an audience of the king, and solicited time; promising, in case it was allowed, to comply with the king's demand. Returning to his fellows, they engaged in fervent prayer to God; and the thing was made known to Daniel in a night vision. He then recited the dream to the king, and gave him also the interpretation. Daniel ii, 28-45.

It is not easy to estimate all the important results of this revelation on the mind of the monarch. Not only did it include a practical proof of the infinite prescience and almighty power of God; it did this in the most significant and effective manner possible;—but it did more. By the colossal image there were represented to the mind of the king the successive great ruling powers of the world, from that day through all the future ages of its history. This vision was also calculated to influence the king with respect to his treatment of the captive Hebrews: the dream and its interpretation showed the direct interposition of God in the affairs of nations; and therefore suggested the responsibility of his position, and the true Divinity of the God of Israel.

An immediate result of this event was the promotion of Daniel to

be chief of the wise men, *Rab Mag*, or *Archimagus*; and ruler over the whole province of Babylon;* and of his companions to important offices in the administration of public affairs. The dignity and power obtained by these individuals must have reflected some advantage upon their countrymen.

It may be desirable here to refer more particularly to the state and condition of the Jews during the captivity. On this subject one point is clear: they were not, in the ordinary sense, reduced to slavery, or the condition of bondmen. This is sufficiently evident from the fact that, when Cyrus issued his decree, allowing their return, there is not the slightest allusion to any public or private right in them. The king specially desires his subjects to aid and assist them in their object; but he speaks throughout, as if the persons addressed occupied an easy and respectable position, only that they were exiles from their native land. It is very probable, as Jahn conjectures, that they were treated as respectable colonists.†

In accordance with this opinion, we find abundant evidence that, notwithstanding their expatriation, the Hebrews preserved amongst them the several gradations of rank, family, and property. Jehoiáchin, whether while in prison, or after his release, and when fed at the royal table, was alike recognized as the political head of the Hebrew nation; and this distinction was equally shared by his son, Shealtiel, and his grandson, Zerubbabel. In the same manner Jozadak and Jeshua were regarded as chief of the sacerdotal race. *Shealtiel*

It has also been contended that the Hebrews, during their sojourn in Chaldea, were governed by their own magistrates. The story of Susanna, whether to any extent authentic, or otherwise, is founded upon this idea. And it is equally probable that many of the Jews, even during this period, possessed considerable wealth. It is a singular fact, that the forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty who came to Judea with Sheshbazzar (being the first body who availed themselves of the edict of Cyrus) possessed, between them, seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven slaves; and that their first contribution toward the restoration of the temple and worship of Jehovah amounted to £120,000 sterling. (See *Dr. Adam Clarke*.) These facts prove that the rule of the Babylonian and Persian kings must, on the whole, have been mild and tolerant. Yet, notwithstanding this, there might have been great reason, at certain times, *Judea*

* It appears that Daniel thus possessed the two highest civil and ecclesiastical offices.

† Hebrew Commonwealth, vol. i, p. 161. See also Esther vii, 4; Abydenus; Cory's Fragments, p. 39. Some had to be redeemed; (see Nehemiah v, 8;) but, in all probability, these were reduced to this condition by the same means which might have deprived them of their personal liberty in their own land.

and, in particular places, for the Hebrews to deprecate the scorn and contumely with which they were frequently treated by their Heathen neighbors and governors; so that an inspired minstrel might not unreasonably pour out the feelings of his heart in language which, on a general view of their case, might appear harsh and violent. Psalm cxxxvii.

Soon after the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, which led, in such an extraordinary manner, to the elevation of Daniel, the king appropriated a part of the spoils which he had obtained in Egypt and Western Asia to make a colossal golden image, which he consecrated, and set up in the plain of Dura; and, having summoned all his principal officers from every part of his vast dominions to meet together on the occasion, he commanded them all, on pain of death, at a given signal, to fall down and worship it.

Dr. Hales has conjectured that Nebuchadnezzar raised this image in proud and haughty defiance of his dream, and of Daniel's interpretation of it. But he adduces no substantial reason for this surmise.* Whatever might have been the object, beyond an imposing and gorgeous act of idolatrous worship, it placed in imminent peril the three companions of Daniel. During the process of this adoration, the king was told that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had not complied with his command, by prostrating themselves before the idol; and, on being questioned, they respectfully, but firmly, refused to do so. The enraged monarch had his fiery furnace made so hot, that the military officers employed to cast these Hebrews into the fire lost their lives in performing the task, which, however, was executed; for the three young men "fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace." Dan. iii, 23. Yet they were miraculously preserved. The fire burned nothing but their bonds. The king soon saw them walking in the midst of the fire, in company with a fourth person, of Divine appearance. He called them, and they came forth out of the fire, living proofs of the power and faithfulness of their God.

It has often been asked, "Where was Daniel on this occasion?" We are not told; but may venture to state positively, that, if present, he did not worship the image. And he might have been present, and have acted like his friends; and yet, respect for his great character, and awe for his rank and power, might have led the accusers to exempt him from the charge, and to level it against those who, although promoted to honorable offices, had as yet done nothing publicly to justify their elevation.

It is very probable that this identical image was the statue of gold,

* This point will be investigated in the next chapter.

twelve cubits high, which stood in the temple of Belus, and was taken away by Xerxes. (See *Herodotus, Clio*, 183.) The height stated by Daniel must have included the pedestal, as no image could be sixty cubits high and six cubits wide. Afterwards, Nebuchadnezzar had another extraordinary dream. In this he saw a great and flourishing tree, and, while he looked, "a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven," (Dan. iv, 13,) and commanded to cut down the tree, leaving the stump still in the ground, with a band of iron and brass. Then, by a singular change of the figure, it is said, that his *man's* heart shall be changed to a *beast's*, until seven times shall have passed over him, until he should acknowledge the power of God in the government of the kingdoms of earth. This dream the king related to Daniel, and demanded an interpretation thereof. The faithful minister was so troubled at the revelation of impending calamity to his royal master, that he was one hour wrapt in the utmost consternation and sorrow; until, when specially urged, he told Nebuchadnezzar that his dream portended great personal distress; that he would be deprived of his reason, reduced to the condition of a brute; and should continue thus for seven years, until he should, by this means, be brought to a full acknowledgment of the power and providence of God.

All this was fulfilled, although a respite of a year was granted; at the expiration of which, the monarch, while walking on the terrace of his palace, exulting in his great power, and especially glorying in the splendor of his capital, gave vent to his feelings in language replete with arrogance; but, while he spake, a voice from heaven arrested his attention, and announced the execution of the predicted doom; and it was done. The maniac sovereign endured all that had been predicted; and, at the end of seven years, was again restored to his dignity, and re-assumed it under a deep sense of the infinite power and goodness of God.

At the death of Nebuchadnezzar, which appears to have happened soon after his recovery from insanity, twenty-five years of captivity had elapsed. During this time the Hebrews had passed through the most fearful vicissitudes. As a nation, they had been completely destroyed. They were now divided and scattered. We cannot suppose that the peasantry and rural population of Judea were all transported to Babylon: the poorest, who were incapable of any political action, remained. All the wealthy, learned, noble, martial part of the people, including even the best of the artisans, were distributed in different parts of the empire; and, by this time, they had so settled down in their new position, that, although retaining all their peculiar religious feeling and a deep sense of their national degradation,

many of them had so effectually conformed to the habits and manners of their neighbors, as to leave doubtful both their origin and nationality.

Evil-Merodach succeeded Nebuchadnezzar in the throne of Babylon. A Jewish tradition states that this prince, during the time of his father's mental disorder, had acted so ill in embroiling the nation in a war with the Medes, that, when his father recovered and resumed the government, he cast him into prison, where he formed an acquaintance with Jehoiachin, the captive king of Judah. (*Jerome, on Isaiah* xix, 29.) Whatever truth there may be in this legend, it is certain that the first act of Evil-Merodach, on ascending the throne, was to raise the incarcerated king of Judah from his prison, where he had lain for above thirty-six years, and to place him in a more honorable position than any of the captive princes in Babylon. "He spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon; and changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life." 2 Kings xxv, 28, 29.

Although, as already intimated, we purpose reserving the most material parts of the connection of the history of the Hebrews with that of Heathen nations to another opportunity, it may be necessary to remark here, that, when the Medes and Babylonians united their forces to throw off the yoke of Assyria, and invest its ancient capital, Cyaxares of Media gave his daughter in marriage to Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar of Babylon; by this means cementing the union of the two houses and nations. From this marriage sprang Evil-Merodach, who, having reigned three years, perished in a war with Media; his son, Belshazzar, succeeding to the government.

The Scriptures afford us but few incidents of his reign. The character of all these sovereigns is given by Isaiah in striking terms. Nebuchadnezzar was styled "a serpent;" Evil-Merodach, "a cockatrice;" and Belshazzar, "a fiery flying serpent." Thus, notwithstanding continued Divine interposition, did each of these sovereigns excel the preceding one in wickedness. The last is only known in sacred history by his impious feast and sudden death; and in profane annals is made remarkable for nothing but his vice and cruelty.

Having made himself generally obnoxious by his tyranny, this monarch seems to have calculated on effacing these impressions by gorgeous revelry. He therefore made a great banquet for a thousand of his lords, who, with his wives and concubines, assembled together to enjoy the luxurious repast.

While thus engaged, it occurred to the mind of the king that would enhance his glory before this noble assembly if he sent for

sacred vessels which his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, and served wine in them to the company. He did so; and, while thus profanely employed, a hand appeared, writing with its finger on the wall opposite the throne: having thus inscribed a sentence, the miraculous agent disappeared; but the mysterious characters remained, to the astonishment and terror of the king and his guests. As was usual in cases of difficulty, the wise men and astrologers were called in; but in vain: they could not read the writing, much less divine its meaning.

In this season of consternation and dismay, the queen-mother came into the banquet-house, and informed the king that Daniel had always been able to afford Nebuchadnezzar aid in cases of similar perplexity, and urged the king to consult him. The Hebrew prophet was called, and having addressed the terrified monarch with great fidelity on his course of life, and brought before his mind his flagrant sins, he proceeded to read the mysterious writing:—

MENE MENE TEKEL PERES UPHARSIN.

Number Number Weight Division and Divisions.

This he explained as meaning, “MENE; God hath *numbered* thy kingdom, and MENE, *finished* it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is *divided*, UPHARSIN, and given to the Medes and Persians.” Dan. v, 25–28. The affrighted king had sufficient presence of mind to reward the prophet according to his promise; but he could not avert his predicted doom. In that night he was slain, and Darius, the Median, took the kingdom, according to the prediction of Daniel. (See *Appendix*, note 98.)

It appears from the history that Belshazzar was assassinated on the night of his feast. He left a son, a child, who survived him a few months. But, as the king of Media was the nearest relative of the royal family, being brother of the queen-mother, and the line of Nebuchadnezzar being extinct, he took the kingdom, as it would seem, peaceably, and with the consent of the Babylonians, who, wearied with the dominion of a cruel race of princes, looked to his government with desire rather than dislike.

By Darius, Daniel was again appointed first minister of the kingdom, and entered upon the duties of his high office. This change in the government augured favorably for the interests of the Jewish people. The degeneracy of Nebuchadnezzar's successors was marked in this respect, especially in the case of Belshazzar; for of him it was truly said, he “opened not the prison for his captives.” It also fulfilled the remarkable predictions which the prophets of Jehovah had delivered respecting the royal line of Babylon, and the transfer

of the kingdom to the line of Media. Isaiah had said of the house of Nebuchadnezzar, "I will cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord." Isaiah xiv, 22. And Jeremiah is even more explicit; for, speaking of Nebuchadnezzar by name, he says, "All nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come." Jer. xxvii, 7. And no less remarkable is that prediction of Daniel, that the kingdom should pass from the sway of Belshazzar into the hands of Media and Persia: a prediction which, delivered under such circumstances, and accompanied by such explicit proofs of Divine power and wisdom, might have exercised a powerful influence in conducing to the quiet transfer of the kingdom to Darius.

The establishment of this sovereign in the government naturally introduced the laws of Media as the statute-code; it was therefore necessary that persons of that country should be associated with the administration of the government. These persons found Daniel a colleague very ill-suited to their taste. They therefore carefully scrutinized his conduct; and the investigation extorted from these enemies the highest compliment ever paid to a political minister. His wisdom and integrity, his industry and energy, were of such a high order, that they sorrowfully said, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." Dan. vi, 5. They therefore obtained a decree from the king, that no subject in the whole empire should make prayer or supplication to any but to himself for thirty days. The law was made, and Daniel soon convicted of its transgression; and, notwithstanding all the benevolent efforts of the sovereign to withstand the arrogant and absurd principle of an unalterable law, he was cast into the den of lions. From this terrible ordeal he was, however, delivered by Almighty power, and restored to his former position of honor and dignity.

The miraculous deliverance of Daniel must have exercised a beneficial influence on the captive Hebrews. The public acknowledgment, in a royal edict, of the greatness and proper Divinity of the God of the Hebrews, would produce some good results in the amelioration of their civil and political condition, and would create a high esteem for them in the breasts of their conquerors.

It seems necessary to remark here, that the scene of this miracle does not appear to have been Babylon; for Daniel had been removed, with the court of Darius, to Susa,* in Persia; (Dan. viii, 1-27;) a

* Jackson has clearly shown that the seventh and eighth chapters of Daniel refer to the reign of Darius; (vol. i, p. 365;) who, having appointed Nabonadus deputy king of Babylon, removed the seat of government to Susa, taking Daniel with him.

fact which accounts for the inflexible exercise of the Medo-Persian laws.

Although it is impossible to cast much light upon the history of the Hebrew people at this period, it is certain that their condition and prospects were now rapidly approaching a crisis, upon the issue of which depended not only their national existence, but the crowning result of God's covenant with Abraham, and, indeed, the religious hope of the world. The promise of redemption was inwrought into the Abrahamic covenant and the Hebrew theocracy. No man ever understood this better than Daniel; no man ever enjoyed better means than he had of studying all the passing features of this case, and their ultimate bearing upon the great predicted consummation.

The important political position which this prophet occupied, both in Babylon and in Persia, gave him an opportunity of knowing all that took place in the history and religion of his countrymen; and the deep patriotic interest which he felt in everything pertaining to his people, led him to avail himself fully of these advantages. Daniel had now been nearly fifty years an exile. He had seen the desolation of his land, had mourned over the ashes of the sanctuary, had watched with deep interest the condition of his people, and had looked anxiously for some indication of an auspicious change in the state of the Hebrews. In all this mental exercise he could not have been ignorant that God had, by his servant Isaiah, a hundred years before this time, predicted by name the person, character, and exploits of Cyrus, and their bearing upon the fate of the Jewish people. The following sublime prophecy must have been familiar to his mind:—

“Thus saith Jehovah thy Redeemer,
 Even he that formed thee from the womb.
 I am Jehovah, who make all things:
 Who stretch out the heavens alone;
 Who spread the earth firm by myself.
 I am he who frustrateth the prognostics of the impostors;
 And maketh the diviners mad;
 Who reverseth the devices of the sages,
 And infatuateth their knowledge;
 Who establisheth the word of his servant;
 And accomplisheth the counsel of his messengers:
 Who sayeth to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited;
 And to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built;
 And her desolated places I will restore:
 Who sayeth to the deep, Be thou wasted;
 And I will dry thy rivers:
 Who sayeth to Cyrus, Thou art my shepherd!
 And he shall fulfill all my pleasure:
 Who sayeth to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built;
 And to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid.

"Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed,
 To Cyrus, whom I hold fast by the right hand:
 That I may subdue nations before him;
 And ungird the loins of kings:
 That I may open before him the valves;
 And the gates shall not be shut.
 I will go before thee;
 And make the mountains level:
 The valves of brass will I break in sunder;
 And the bars of iron will I hew down.
 And I will give unto thee the treasures of darkness,
 And the stores deep hidden in secret places:
 That thou mayest know that I am Jehovah;
 He that calleth thee by thy name, the God of Israel.
 For the sake of my servant Jacob,
 And of Israel my chosen,
 I have even called thee by thy name;
 I have surnamed thee, though thou knowest me not.
 I am Jehovah, and none else:
 Beside me there is no God:
 I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me."

Isaiah xliv, 24-28; xlv, 1-5, *Louth's translation.*

This sublime prophecy was not only written before Cyrus was born, but when Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the temple, existed in all their pride and beauty. Daniel had seen, in the ruin of his land, a way opened for the fulfillment of these predictions; and, burdened as he was with the woes of Israel, with what feeling must he have heard that a prince of Persia had been named Cyrus! How intensely must he have watched the progress of this child to youth, and from youth to manhood! Still more interesting must the current of events have been to the observation of the prophet, which threw Babylon under the government of Media, and placed Cyrus, full of wisdom and energy, the heir-apparent to that widely-extended empire. All this had come to pass: with all these preliminary arrangements the mind of Daniel had been deeply affected and excited; and, while dwelling on the subject, he found, by the writings of Jeremiah, that seventy years was the divinely-allotted time for terminating the desolations of Jerusalem. Dan. ix, 2. He therefore earnestly prayed that God would compassionate his ancient people, forgive their sin, and restore them to his favor; and, whilst he thus prayed, an angel-messenger was sent to solve his doubts, and to shed a glorious light upon God's great merciful purpose concerning mankind.

The prophet was now informed that "a commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem" should go forth; that this should be carried into effect; that, although in troublous times, the street and the wall should be built. But these facts were not only communicated, as interesting and important in themselves, but as the basis of yet

more important revelations : for it was added, that, in seventy prophetic weeks after " the going forth of this commandment," Messiah should come, and the great economy of grace be fully carried into effect. Other revelations, exhibiting the glory and destiny of the Persian empire, and also of those by which it was to be followed, were made to the prophet during the reign of Darius : so that it may be questioned whether ever man was enabled so fully to penetrate the darkness of the future in respect of God's providential arrangements with the world, as was Daniel at this period.

Nor is it conceivable that this knowledge should have been confined to himself. He would surely inform the Jewish princes and priests, the heads of families and men of wealth, of their approaching deliverance. And it is, to say the least, extremely probable that the termination of the Persian empire, by the successful invasion of Grecia, was revealed to Daniel at this time ; that, by communicating it to his people, they might be the less inclined to remain in Chaldea, with the threatening of a successful invasion impending over it, than to incur the trouble of a journey to Palestine, as soon as the way was opened for their return.

While Daniel was in the east, thus preparing the public mind of his fellow-countrymen for their approaching deliverance, Ezekiel, on the banks of the river Chebar, was pursuing, although by other means, the same vocation. This prophet had also been taken from Judea in the early part of the troubles which issued in its ruin. He was called to deliver several revelations of the Divine will respecting the punishment of Judah for its sin, and the judgments with which the neighboring nations should also be visited ; and ultimately to predict the restoration of the captive Hebrews to their country, and the approaching glories of the Messiah's kingdom. Particular attention is called to this latter section of his writings. It begins with chapter xxxiii. Reference may be made to chapters xxxvi, and xxxvii, as the portion which specially bears upon the restoration of Israel. The greater part of the first of these chapters is a clear and direct prediction of this deliverance : the latter exhibits the manner and certainty of its accomplishment. Under the similitude of " dry bones," the political condition of the captive Hebrews is vividly set forth. They are disunited, they have no unity. As a nation, like a human body, derives its life and power from the close and constant association of all its parts, each adding to the strength of every other ; so these dry bones, exhibiting the loss of all this union and strength, afforded a striking illustration of the political death which had passed upon the Hebrew people. But the vision pointed out the means and the progress of the remedy. By the gracious inter-

position of God, a different spirit was to come over the people; they were no longer to lie down content with their condition as captives in a strange land. Desires of national independence were to be excited, consequent sympathies were called forth; "bone came to his bone." These aspirations were interchanged, until, from repeated intercourse and consultation, the Israelites, locally divided and scattered as they were, became, in opinion, purpose, and desire, associated into one body politic. This silent and imperceptible change was to be effected; and, by the influence of prophetic teaching and other divinely appointed agency, it was produced. But then, they had in themselves no power to work out their deliverance, and establish their independence. These agencies had re-organized the body; but, in comparison with the boundless might of the Medo-Persian empire, they were impotent: they now became a body, but it was dead, "there was no breath in them." It required a further interposition of God to effect their release.

While the Jewish people lay in this low condition, Darius the Mede died, and left the extensive empire over which he had reigned to his nephew Cyrus. The imagination would delight to dwell on the intercourse between this royal Persian and the venerable Hebrew prophet. But we will confine ourselves to facts, which are either explicitly stated, or certainly deduced from the history.

It is declared, on the highest authority, that "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian." And as he occupied the position of first minister under the former monarch, these words most assuredly teach that he filled a similar situation under Cyrus. In those circumstances, could Daniel conceal from Cyrus the Divine revelations which had been made respecting the restoration of his people? Let any person, with a distinct recognition of all these particulars, read the decree of Cyrus, (*Ezra* i, 2-4,) and say whether it does not exhibit striking internal evidence of having been drawn up by Daniel, or, at least, of having been written under the influence of communications which must have been made by him. Would a Persian prince, brought up under the teaching of the Magi, of his own accord, say, that "Jehovah, God of heaven," had given him all his power? And would he, if ignorant of the prophecy of Isaiah, say that this Jehovah "hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah?"—*Josephus, Ant.*, b. xi, chap. i, sec. 1. The entire scope of the history, together with our knowledge of the character of Cyrus and of Daniel, fully justifies the opinion that the prophet freely and fully communicated to his royal master the revelations with which he was acquainted. And it is a fact as singular as it is important, that this

mighty monarch should have ordered an inscription to be made on his tomb, which fully confirms the opinions that have been advanced on this subject. Pliny, Arrian, and Strabo describe the tomb of Cyrus at Pasargadae in Persia; and Plutarch says it had the following words engraven on it: "O man, whoever thou art, and whenever thou comest, (for come I know thou wilt,) I am CYRUS, the founder of the Persian empire. Envy me not the little earth that covers my body." However enigmatical this might appear to Greek or Roman writers, to us, who can compare it with his edict in favor of the Jews, and the several prophecies which he had the means of knowing, it appears to prove decisively that he had learned the destiny of the empire which he had raised, and its certain subversion by a foreign conqueror, and had accordingly provided an address to this warrior which he had caused to be inscribed on his sepulchre.

In the first year of his reign, Cyrus issued his famous edict in favor of Jewish emancipation; a fact which further proves his intercourse with the Hebrew prophet; but for this, such a measure would scarcely have been so early taken. This edict was responded to by a great number, although far from the whole, of the Hebrew people. The inducements to remain at ease in their present condition, rather than to incur the labor and danger of the journey, led many to shrink from the effort. It is indeed plainly intimated in the Scripture narrative, that a special divine impulse was necessary to rouse the *people* to avail themselves of the proffered privilege; for, on the promulgation of the decree, we are told, "Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, *with all them whose spirit God had raised*, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem." Ezra i, 5.

The princes, priests, and people who thus assembled themselves to return to the land of their fathers, were ranged under the command of Zerubbabel, the grandson of Jehoiachin, who was appointed *tushata* or governor, and of Jeshua the high priest. This company numbered forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty; and their servants and maids, seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; so that the entire company amounted, in round numbers, to fifty thousand. The camels, horses, and other beasts of burden, which were used for the purpose of transit on this occasion, amounted to eight thousand one hundred and thirty-six. To Zerubbabel, as the chief, the treasurer of the king of Persia delivered all the sacred utensils which had been taken from the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and also the donations of those Jews who, although they preferred remaining in the east, were, nevertheless, willing to aid with their substance those who returned. No information is given as to the

time devoted to these preparations; nor are we told how many days were occupied on the journey; but when Ezra passed over the same ground, it was just four months from the time that he left Babylon before he reached Jerusalem. As on this first occasion there was much more baggage and other incumbrance, it would certainly occupy as long a period, if not a much longer.

This caravan, however, reached its destination in safety; and the Israelites, having made a noble benefaction towards the erection of the temple, proceeded to locate themselves in their respective places of abode. It must be distinctly understood, that the sovereign of Persia, in thus restoring the Hebrews to their own land, had no intention of allowing them an independent government. At this time Palestine was regarded as an integral province of the Medo-Persian empire. It might, therefore, have been rationally supposed, that Cyrus would not only issue an edict in Persia, authorizing the return of the Hebrews, but that he would also communicate his will on the subject to the persons intrusted with the government of this part of the empire. There is, however, no notice of anything of this kind in the sacred narrative; but it is a curious circumstance, that this deficiency is supplied by Josephus. The Jewish antiquarian relates, that Cyrus sent a rescript to the governors of Syria, informing them that he had given the Jews leave to return, and to build the temple, which he intended to have done with polished stones; that the altar should be reared; and that all the expense should be defrayed out of the royal treasury. (See Josephus, *Antiquities*, b. xi, ch. i, sect. 3.)

As the edict of Cyrus recognized no distinction between those captives who had belonged to the ten tribes, and those of the house of Judah, so it is probable that persons from all the tribes united to compose the first caravan which returned to Jerusalem. It is also likely that, upon hearing of the safety and prosperity of their brethren in Judea, others followed, and took up their abode in their respective tribes. For, notwithstanding the pre-occupation of Samaria, it is certain that many pure Israelites returned, and located and multiplied in Galilee, and other northern districts of Palestine;* although it is very probable that a greater number of the people of Judah, who had been more recently carried into captivity, returned, than of Israel, who had been located in a foreign land more than a century longer.

Having obtained the means of subsistence, the people cleared away the ruins of the former temple, and reared the altar of burnt-offering; and on the seventh month they celebrated the feast of

* Jahn's *Hebrew Commonwealth*, book vii, sect. 53; 1 *Maccabees* v, 9-24.

tabernacles. The daily sacrifice was recommenced on the first day of the seventh month. But, notwithstanding the anxiety of the people to hasten the building of the temple, a considerable time was occupied in preparations for the erection of the edifice. They had, even now, as in the days of Solomon, to obtain the assistance of Phenician artificers from Tyre and Sidon, and to have cedar-trees cut in Lebanon, and carried to Tyre, and from thence floated to Joppa, and carried to Jerusalem. These preliminary works being accomplished, the foundation of the temple was laid in the second month of the second year after the return from Babylonia. When this was done, the priests appeared in their canonical costume, and the Levites with cymbals. Thus they sang together, and praised God, and all the people shouted because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. Ezra iii. The old people, indeed, wept at the contrast which the limited means of the nation now presented to build the house, in comparison of the glorious structure which they had previously beheld with admiration; while the young people shouted with joy to see the building begun; so that the sorrows of the fathers, and the joys of their children, were mingled together in one common burst of grateful feeling.

As this work progressed under the auspices of the imperial government, the descendants of those persons who had been transplanted from Assyria to inhabit the cities of Samaria, and who had intermarried with the Israelites of that district, came to Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and proffered their services to help forward the work, alleging that they also worshiped and sacrificed to the God of Israel. But the prince and the priest refused their offers, and persisted in carrying on the work alone. This rejection turned those pretended friends into implacable enemies, who thenceforth endeavored to thwart and oppose the Jews to the utmost of their power. They not only resisted their purpose by all those petty and malignant annoyances which their neighborhood and settled condition enabled them to exercise; but also employed agents to prejudice their cause in the estimation of the sovereign. Their opposition does not appear to have elicited any counter edict from Cyrus. That monarch, having retained the venerable Daniel in his service for the first three years of his reign, would not be likely to have his purpose, in favor of the Jews, directly interfered with. But, being fully occupied with wars, and with the exciting labor of consolidating his immense empire, he would have little leisure to inquire into the progress of the work at Jerusalem. Thus his officers might have been tampered with, and difficulties thrown in the way of Zerubbabel; so that the statement of Ezra may be fully received, that these Samaritans

“hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus.” Ezra iv, 5.

Although this opposition greatly harassed the Jews, it did not induce them altogether to desist from their labor; but when Cyrus was dead, and his son, Cambyses, (called Artaxerxes by Ezra, chap. iv,) had ascended the throne, the Samaritans sent a special communication to the imperial court, to represent the danger which would accrue to the king's government by the rebuilding of the temple and city of Jerusalem; and referring to the history of the Hebrew nation in proof of their assertions. Ezra iv. These efforts were so far successful, that an imperial mandate was returned, forbidding the rebuilding of the city. This edict was enforced, and the progress of the work stayed, until the accession of Darius. The turbulent reign of Cambyses, the usurpation of Smerdis, and the consequent revolution which set Darius Hystaspes on the throne, had generally deranged the affairs of the Persian empire, and opened a way for the Jews to make a new effort to carry on their great work.

This opportunity was rendered more effectual by Divine aid and interposition. Haggai and Zechariah were raised up, as inspired prophets of Jehovah, to incite the people to prosecute the building of the temple to its completion. The first of these rebuked the opinion which seems to have obtained among the Jews, that the seventy years allotted to the captivity had not fully expired, and, therefore, that the *time* was “not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.” Haggai i, 2. In reply to this objection, the prophet, in a strain of lofty and powerful eloquence, rebukes the indolent spirit of the Jews; who, while they had prepared splendid houses for themselves, allowed the house of the Lord to remain in ruins; assuring them that God had visited them with providential infliction, on account of their supineness, that their harvests had been unproductive, and the wine, corn, and oil limited in quantity; and giving a hope of Divine blessing if they would zealously devote themselves to the service of God. The Divine call roused Zerubbabel and Jeshua the high priest to a sense of their duty. The spirit of the people rose responsive to that of their leaders, they resumed the building of the sacred house; and, when the old men lamented the inferior character of the material, and style of workmanship, in comparison with the glory and costliness of that built by Solomon, the prophet was taught to declare that God was about to fulfill the great purposes of his grace; and that, notwithstanding the inferior aspect of this building, it should be filled with glory when the Desire of all nations should come; so that “the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of

hosts : and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." Haggai ii, 9. Thus encouraged, the people vigorously prosecuted the work.

On the accession of Darius, Josephus states that Zerubbabel went to Babylon, as there had been "an old friendship between him and the king;" and that there, having distinguished himself by his wit and wisdom, he obtained a confirmation of the grant of Cyrus, and many other privileges for the Jewish nation; and was, therefore, on his return, the more ready to respond to the call of Haggai, and to proceed with the accomplishment of the temple. The sacred writers, however, make no mention of this visit; and it is remarkable that when, on the resumption of the work, Tatnai, the governor of Syria, came to demand on what authority they proceeded with this building, they did not plead the authority of Darius, as they would be likely to have done, if the story of Josephus had been true; but, on the contrary, pleaded the edict of Cyrus: upon which the governor drew up a temperate and candid statement of the case, and sent it to the king; who, having searched the archives of the empire, and found a copy of the decree of Cyrus, as had been pleaded by the Jews, at once confirmed it, and ordered that the Jews should have full liberty and every encouragement to proceed with their work; and that all persons molesting them should be severely punished.

Under these favorable circumstances the temple was reared and finished. The building was resumed on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, and finished on the third day of the twelfth month, in the sixth year of his reign; four years and a quarter having been occupied in the work. The temple was then solemnly dedicated to God. This was a season of great joy to the returned Hebrews; and they appear to have entered into it with one accord. Having offered sacrifice to God, the services of the temple were commenced, and the priests and Levites arranged in their courses, as formerly. On the fourteenth day of the following month the passover was kept, with great solemnity and effect.

The Samaritans were sorely vexed that, notwithstanding all their efforts, the sacred edifice at Jerusalem was completed. They, however, thought that even this disagreeable fact might be turned to their own advantage. Having always regarded it as a great indignity that they should be compelled to pay the tribute, due from them to the imperial treasury, to the Jews; when the sacred building was completed, they, on the pretense that this payment was only intended to defray the cost of the erection, refused to continue these contributions. The Jews knew that both Cyrus (Josephus, Ant., b. xi, chap. i) and Darius (Ezra vi, 8-10) had not only appointed this

pecuniary aid for the building of the temple, but also for the maintenance of the priests and the cost of sacrifices, that prayer might constantly be made to the God of heaven for the king and the royal family: they therefore resolved not to be deprived of this aid without an appeal to the imperial court. Zerubbabel, their governor, and two men of consequence, Ananias and Mordecai, were accordingly sent to prefer their complaint against the Samaritans to Darius.

The king received the deputation very courteously; and, having fully informed himself on the subject, issued a new decree, by which he commanded his officers at Samaria to cause the usual tribute to be paid to the temple in future, without any irregularity on any pretense whatever. This appears to have been effectual, as we hear nothing more of these objections for many years. During the remainder of the reign of Darius, and throughout that of Xerxes, nothing of any particular moment is recorded of the Jews. They progressed in population and stability. When that mad invader of Greece was cut off, his son, Artaxerxes Longimanus, succeeded him. This prince was the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther. Having, during the first two years of his reign, succeeded in destroying his traitorous nobles and rivals for power, in the third year he instituted general rejoicings at Susa. It was this circumstance which led to the deposition of Queen Vashti, and, ultimately, to the appointment of the beautiful young Jewess to supply her place; the details of which are found in the Scriptures. Esther i, ii.

In the seventh year of the reign of this prince, he sent Ezra to Jerusalem. This was one of the most important events which occurred in the entire progress of the restoration. Ezra was a priest, and a learned scribe: he was, moreover, a man of great capacity and piety. Although his mission is very particularly set forth in the sacred narrative, we are not informed of the motives which led to this step, nor whether the purpose originated with Ezra or with the king. It is, however, very probable, that the interest taken by Persia in the affairs of Egypt and Greece, made it more than ever the policy of Ahasuerus to raise up a strong friendly interest in Palestine. But, however this might have been, Ezra not only received a splendid royal donation toward the support of the temple, but was authorized to receive free-will contributions from all who would give to the same object. The royal mandate issued on this occasion not only encouraged the Jews who still remained in Persia and Chaldea, to return to Jerusalem; but it gave Ezra power to command supplies for the support of the temple from the governors of Syria, to a very considerable extent. It also conferred on him the power of appointing judges

and magistrates, and of punishing offenders, either by confiscation, imprisonment, banishment, or death : a further proof that the Persian crown regarded the province of Palestine as under its absolute jurisdiction.

The pious Ezra attributed this act to the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the mind of the king, and blessed God for this interposition on behalf of his people. And it is not unlikely that Artaxerxes had heard enough of Jewish history to feel a hope that kindness toward this people, and a liberal aid toward the maintenance of the temple, might avert evil, and secure to him the blessing of Heaven. As much as this appears to be indicated in the sacred narrative. Ezra vii, 23.

A considerable number of persons accompanied Ezra on this occasion ; and, having safely arrived at Jerusalem, he handed over the contribution and vessels with which he had been intrusted in Babylon, to the principal priests, to be deposited in the temple. In this act he showed his own people the office to which he had been appointed, and the power with which he had been invested, by the king. Ezra also presented his credentials to the governors of Coelosyria and Phenicia, and was thus enabled to avail himself of all the advantages guaranteed by the king. (See Josephus, Antiquities, b. xi, ch. v, sect. 3.)

Very imperfect information is given respecting the numerous and important reforms which Ezra undoubtedly introduced into the jurisprudence and general government of his people. The principal instance of the exercise of the authority with which he was invested respects the correction of a serious abuse which had been practiced respecting the law of marriage. Many of the people, in violation of the Mosaic statute, had contracted marriages with Gentile women. This practice would not only have led them inevitably into idolatry, but would, if persisted in, have broken down all distinction between the descendants of Jacob and the Heathen world. Ezra knew all this, and therefore regarded it as a vital point to remove the evil. But, if the danger was great, so was the difficulty of averting it. In all probability, the women were ignorant that this connection was unlawful ; many children had been born ; and these circumstances, added to the natural influence of matrimonial affection, rendered the abolition a work of immense trial and difficulty, if not of positive hardship, to some of the parties interested. It was, however, essential that the evil should be corrected. Ezra, therefore, on being apprised of its existence, manifested the most extreme sorrow : he rent his clothes and his hair, and sat down, overwhelmed with grief, until the time of the evening sacrifice. The people who feared God,

alarmed at these manifestations of sorrow, gathered around their chief. In this emergency the conduct of Ezra was remarkable. He neither interposed his authority nor his eloquence, in endeavoring to make the people sensible of their sin. At the time of the evening sacrifice, he again rent his clothes, fell on his knees, and engaged in earnest prayer unto God. In this supplication he acknowledged the great goodness of Jehovah unto Israel, and the aggravated iniquities of the people; especially in this last instance, anticipating imminent ruin from this fearful transgression. This spiritual exercise had the desired effect. The people, deeply humbled and convinced, wept very much.

One of the chiefs arose, and proposed that all those who had transgressed the law in this case should immediately repair the evil by putting away their wives. To this others assented; and it was resolved to renew their covenant with Jehovah, and purge themselves from this iniquity. They therefore encouraged Ezra, assuring him that they would accomplish this work; which, notwithstanding some men of rank had children by their wives, appears to have been fully completed.

While Ezra was carrying out these reforms, circumstances were transpiring at the Persian court which issued in providing him an eminent coadjutor in his great work. Nehemiah, a noble Jew, who was cup-bearer to the king of Persia, and whose heart was deeply interested in the prosperity of his people, having heard of the difficulties to which those of his brethren who had returned to Judea were subjected, and of the still unfinished and desolate state of Jerusalem, was exceedingly afflicted. Josephus gives a probable account of this circumstance. Nehemiah, walking before Susa, overheard some persons conversing in the Hebrew language; and, on drawing near, and inquiring of them the subject of their discourse, was told that they had returned from Judea. He then earnestly inquired into the condition of those who had gone to Palestine; and they narrated to him their misfortunes, and the miserable state of Jerusalem. (Antiquities, b. xi, ch. vi, sec. 6.)

Nehemiah, deeply affected at this account, sought comfort in prayer to God, closing his supplication with a reference to his finding favor in the sight of the king: a proof that he seriously meditated exerting himself as far as possible in behalf of his brethren. By the gracious interposition of Providence, his desires were amply gratified. On his presenting himself before the king to perform the duties of his office, the sorrowful aspect of his countenance was immediately perceived, and the sovereign kindly asked the reason; when Nehemiah frankly told him the cause of his disquiet. The king then in-

quired whether he had any petition to present; and this pious Jew, lifting his heart to God in prayer for Divine direction, asked to be sent to the help of his brethren. His petition was granted; and the king gave him a royal commission, by which he was authorized to obtain materials for the building: a military guard was also appointed to accompany him.

Thus favored, he reached Jerusalem; and, having inspected the state of the walls, was greatly affected. Having made this survey in a private manner, he, on the following day, assembled the elders, produced his credentials, and proceeded at once to carry his purpose into effect. Nehemiah first directed his efforts to the rebuilding of the wall, and set up the gates, without which Jerusalem was an unprotected town, open to the aggression of any body of marauders. The means which he adopted to effect this object were, in all probability, the best that could have been devised. He divided the wall into sections, and assigned one of these to each of the great families which had returned from their captivity. By this arrangement the work progressed in all its parts, and the energies of the whole people were simultaneously engaged. These judicious and vigorous efforts gave great umbrage to the Samaritan enemies of the Jews, and called forth from them the most violent opposition. Sanballat and Tobiah, the leaders of this faction, having in vain endeavored to prevent the prosecution of the work, on the ground of its being contrary to the imperial will, Nehemiah's commission having set that question at rest, they tormented the Jewish governor with ridicule, harassed him by suborning factious parties among the Jews; and, all these failing, they threatened to prevent the completion of the work by force of arms.

The devoted courage and sound judgment of the governor defeated all these efforts. The Jews proceeded with the building, their arms being piled within their reach, and swords girded at their side. The wall being finished, and the gates set up, the whole was formally dedicated to God by solemn services. Neh. xii, 27-43. The completion of this vast work did not release Nehemiah from his difficulties. One serious evil had arisen during the progress of the building. The bulk of the people were poor when they returned to Judea: the difficulties to which they were exposed after their settlement there, the slender harvests which had been judicially sent them on account of their religious unfaithfulness and want of zeal in building the temple, (Haggai i, 6-11,) together with the impoverishment occasioned by the building of the walls, had all tended to make the poor still poorer; to reduce them, indeed, to the lowest grade of wretchedness. Their lands were mortgaged; even their sons and daughters were sold for bondmen and bondwomen; until their condition became intolerable.

When these things came to the knowledge of Nehemiah, he was angry, and, in a large assembly of the people, denounced this evil in strong terms : saying, " We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the Heathen ; and will ye even sell your brethren ? or shall they be sold unto us ? " Neh. v, 8. He then exhorted the rich creditors to abandon the illegal and oppressive system of usury, to restore the fields and vineyards of the poor, and thus instantly to remove the evil which had wrought so much mischief, and threatened to ruin the prospects of these returned Hebrews, by vitiating the first principles of their civil and religious polity. He was successful. Touched by this plain exhibition of the evil, and alarmed for its consequences, the transgressors at once consented to act as the governor had recommended ; and he cagerly completed what was so auspiciously begun, by calling the priests, and taking a solemn oath of the parties, " that they should do according to this promise." Then the people praised the Lord ; and Nehemiah carefully informs us that this solemn engagement was faithfully fulfilled : " The people did according to this promise." Verses 12, 13.

Another difficulty yet remained. The population being scarcely equal to the territory which they had to occupy, and the principal resources of the people arising from the cultivation of fields and vineyards, it was much more profitable for them to reside in the country on their landed property than to locate in Jerusalem. The operation of this was injurious to the strength of the state. For, however desirable it might be to cultivate the land, and obtain the largest amount of revenue from the soil, it was no less important that the chief city should be occupied by a population sufficiently numerous, industrious, and wealthy to give it a respectable influence among the surrounding provinces, and to form a centre of intelligence and strength in case of aggression ; an advantage which would have been utterly lost, if the people had divided themselves into sections for the occupation of small and unimportant towns, or scattered themselves over the country as a rural population.

To meet this difficulty, it was agreed to select one-tenth of the people by lot to dwell in Jerusalem. Besides these, many others offered themselves willingly, and thus entitled themselves to the gratitude of their country. The great improvements effected by the pious and devoted labors of Ezra and Nehemiah may be noticed under the following heads : 1. They engaged the people in a solemn covenant to walk in God's law as given by Moses. Neh. x, 29. 2. To avoid and renounce all intermarriages with the heathen. Verse 30. 3. To observe the Sabbath day, and not to buy nor sell thereon. 4. To observe the Sabbatical year, and to remit all debts

therein. Verse 31. 5. To pay a tax of a third of a shekel yearly for the service of the temple. Verse 32. 6. To bring the first-fruits of the ground, of their sons, and of their cattle, to the house of God. Verses 35, 36. And, 7. To give the tithe of all the proceeds of the ground to the priests and Levites. Verse 37.

Having accomplished these very important objects, and placed the infant state in circumstances conducive to its progress and welfare, Nehemiah, according to his promise, returned to the court of Persia.

No means exist of calculating with accuracy the length of his stay in the East. Prideaux supposes it to have been about four years; Dr. Hales, about double that time. But, whatever the period of his absence, it was sufficient for the introduction of the most serious abuses, and the practical contravention of several parts of the covenant into which the people had solemnly entered. Whether Nehemiah had heard of these disorders while in Persia, or had returned under the influence of his devoted love to his nation, ignorant of what had taken place, we are not informed; but no sooner had he arrived, and seen the existence of these evils, than he at once resumed his work of reformation. He first found that his former inveterate enemy, Tobiah the Ammonite, (Neh. iv, 3-7; vi, 19,) who had married a Jewish woman, as had his son Johanan, (Neh. vi, 18,) the father having thus become related to the high priest, had been accommodated with a large apartment within the limits of the temple, from which even Israelites who were not of the tribe of Levi were excluded. Neh. xiii, 4, 5.

Another great abuse which had been introduced, was an almost total disregard of the sacred obligation of the Sabbath. They threshed their corn, pressed their wine and oil, and dealt largely in mercantile wares with the Tyrians, on that holy day. This conduct was the more inexcusable, as the past exertions of Nehemiah, aided as they were by the pious labors and teaching of Ezra, were still further strengthened by the inspired communications of Haggai and Zechariah.

But what their exhortations could not effect, was done by the energy and authority of the governor. He, having caused the book of the law to be read in the hearing of all the people, and having thus informed them that it was God's command that "an Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord forever;" (Deut. xxiii, 3;) the Hebrews separated themselves at once from all the mixed multitude. Nehemiah, therefore, cast forth the household stuff of Tobiah, and cleansed the chambers which he had occupied. He also put an end to the public profanation of the Sabbath. To

render this effectual, he prohibited the carrying of any burden through the gates on this holy day. The governor also corrected several disorders which had obtained in respect of the payment of the tithes, and the regular performance of the services of the temple. Even the priesthood was corrupted; for not only had the high priest been diverted from his path of duty in consequence of these alliances with the heathen, but his grandson also, Manasseh the son of Joiada, had married a daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, and the inveterate enemy of the Jews. He was expelled from the priesthood by Nehemiah; (Neh. xiii, 28-30;) who thus cleansed the sacred families from all strangers.

It was this person (who is by Josephus erroneously placed in the reign of Darius Codomanus) for whom his father-in-law built the famous Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, as a rival of that at Jerusalem. The Jewish antiquarian intimates that Manasseh complained to Sanballat that, by retaining his daughter as his wife, he was sacrificing the highest honors in the Jewish state: upon which his father-in-law declared his purpose of building this temple, at the same time promising him the high priesthood of it; intimating that he would exert himself to attach the government of the province to the pontifical dignity. This was done, and thus the temple was built on Gerizim; and the Samaritans were henceforth not only a hostile people, but a rival religious sect.

With these last reforms of Nehemiah, we close the history of this period. It will be necessary, however, to refer briefly to events of deep interest and importance to the Jews, which, during this administration, occurred in Persia. In the third year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus,* he, as already related, made a great feast for his captains and nobles. This was not intended to be one gorgeous and single banquet: it was to range over one hundred and eighty days, nearly half a year, and to be replete with every kind of magnificence. At the close of this festive season, the king made a great banquet for all the people, who were assembled in the palace of Shushan. On the seventh day of this banquet he commanded the queen Vashti to be brought into the assembly, dressed in her royal apparel, that the princes might see her beauty. The queen, however, refused to obey the summons, and would not go into the hall.

The result of this conduct was, that, according to the advice given by the seven wise men of the kingdom, Vashti was deposed from

* That this prince was the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther, has been abundantly proved; in fact, any other opinion entangles the subject in difficulties, dangerous, if not fatal, to the authority of this canonical book. (See Josephus's Antiquities, book xi, chap. vi.)

her royal dignity, and the king saw her no more; while, to supply the vacant throne, a great number of the most beautiful virgins in the kingdom were selected, from whom the king might choose one to be his royal spouse. It happened that at this time there was in the Persian capital a Jew, named Mordecai, who had brought up a lovely niece, called Esther. She was one of the virgins selected on this occasion, and was ultimately chosen by the king to be his queen consort.

Esther was advanced to this dignity in the seventh year of the reign of the king, in the twelfth month; while Ezra had been commissioned and sent to Jerusalem the first month of the same year. It seems evident, therefore, that state policy, and not the influence of Esther, led to this measure. Besides, if this chronological point is waived, on account of the difficulties connected with the history of this period, it is certain that Esther's nation was not known when she was received into the palace; nor did she declare it until compelled thereto by the malignity of Haman.*

This last-named individual, who was the king's special favorite and prime minister, had contracted a morbid antipathy against Mordecai. But as the king discovered that the latter had detected and exposed a conspiracy against the royal person and life, Haman, even while plotting his death, was compelled to do him the highest honor. Defeated thus in his aim against an individual, he directed his rage against a whole people; and, being an Amalekite, this was not an unnatural feeling. On the plea, therefore, that the Jews (who, although intended, are not named in the allegation) were a people different from the rest of the king's subjects, and very disobedient to his laws, and on condition that Haman should pay into the king's treasury ten thousand talents of silver,† Artaxerxes gave him the power to appoint a day for the extermination of a whole people. This took place in the twelfth year of the king's reign, five years after Ezra had been sent to Jerusalem.

When Mordecai knew what had taken place, he told Esther; and she nobly resolved to hazard her own life in an effort to save her race. She did so, was accepted of the king, and, having chosen her course with consummate judgment, she denounced the malignity of Haman to her husband. The malicious Amalekite was instantly condemned to death. Yet, notwithstanding this change in the royal judgment, the decree could not be changed; it having been

* The conjecture of Prideaux, that, although Esther concealed her extraction from the king, she nevertheless secured the appointment of Ezra, is altogether inadmissible.

† It is probable that this immense sum was a composition for the amount of spoil and property to be taken from the murdered Hebrews.

issued as a part of "the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." Dan. vi, 8. Never was there a more melancholy exhibition of the absurdity of this statement. All that was possible was done. The king, by another royal edict, gave the Jews liberty, on the day named, to resist all aggression by force; and, as this last was known to convey the real wishes of the sovereign, and as Haman had already fallen, it answered every purpose, except preventing a bloody collision in every part of the kingdom. In this conflict, the Jews, standing in their own defense, slew of those who assailed them throughout the empire seventy-five thousand and eight hundred men. The feast of *Purim* was established among the Jews to commemorate this deliverance.

Without being able to refer to any particular interference, it is certain that the influence of Esther, and the elevation and power of Mordecai, must have greatly benefited the position of the Jews at Jerusalem. Nor can we reasonably doubt that the special favor with which Ahasuerus regarded the Hebrews, throughout the remainder of his long reign, had some reference to, if it was not directly caused by, these circumstances.

REMARKABLE EVENTS DURING THE CAPTIVITY AND RESTORATION.

	B. C.
First carrying away of the Hebrews from beyond Jordan, Zebulun, and Naphtali	740
Samaria taken, and the People carried into Captivity	719
Daniel and his Companions taken to Babylon (fourth Year of Jehoiachin) ..	604
Deposition of Jehoiachin	598
Destruction of Jerusalem, and Captivity of Judah	586
Gedaliah appointed Governor of Judea	585
Last Deportation of Hebrews to Babylon	581
Nebuchadnezzar conquers Egypt—Hebrew Emigrants destroyed	570
His first Dream	569
Sets up his golden Image	—
His second Dream	568
His Restoration to Reason and Power	561
His Death	—
Evil-Merodach succeeds to the Throne	—
Jehoiachin released from prison, and honored	560
Evil-Merodach dies, and Belshazzar ascends the Throne	558
Belshazzar's Feast and Death	553
Darius the Mede, or Cyaxares II., obtains the Kingdom	—
Daniel cast into the Lions' Den	552
Cyrus the Persian	551
Takes Babylon—Era of his Sovereignty	538
Issues his Edict in favor of the Jews	—
Zerubbabel, with the first Caravan of Jews, returns to Judea	—
Joshua High Priest	—
The second Temple begun	534
Cambyzes begins to reign	529
The Building stayed on the Appeal of the Samaritans	—

	B. C.
Darius Hystaspes ascends the Throne	521
Haggai and Zechariah begin to prophesy.....	—
The building of the Temple resumed	519
The Temple finished.....	516
Xerxes begins to reign.....	485
Jehoiakin High Priest (thirty years)	—
Artaxerxes Longimanus ascends the Throne	464
Ezra sent into Judea, accompanied by a Caravan of Hebrews.....	457
Esther becomes Queen Consort.....	—
The Efforts of Haman for the Destruction of the Jews defeated by the Instrumentality of Esther.....	452
Mordecai advanced to Honor and Power in the Court of Persia.....	—
Nehemiah sent to Judea as Governor.....	440
Eliashib High Priest	—
Nehemiah builds the City Walls	—
Returns to Persia	432
Comes again to Jerusalem.....	424
Darius Nothus begins to reign	423
Nehemiah's civil and religious Reformation until.....	420

CHAPTER IX.

THE RELIGION OF THE HEBREWS DURING THE CAPTIVITY.

THE FALL OF THE HEBREW NATION A DIVINE INFLICTION on Account of general Transgression—Idolatry introduced by Jehoram—Fostered by succeeding Kings—And, notwithstanding the Efforts of some pious Princes, becomes paramount in Influence—The Extent of this Apostasy shown by Jeremiah—And more fully detailed by Ezekiel—Those who continued to worship Jehovah generally formal and insincere—The Prevalence of Vice and Violence—**THE PRESENCE OF JEHOVAH WITHDRAWN FROM THE TEMPLE**—Lingers over the City—And finally departs from the Mount of Olives—The idolatrous and wicked Hebrews destroyed in the national Ruin—The Pious preserved, and carried into Captivity—Effects of this national Ruin upon the religious Opinions and Hopes of the Hebrews—It did not destroy their Confidence in God's covenant Mercy—Advantageous Position of the Hebrews at this Time for acquiring just Views of their covenant Relation to Jehovah, and of the Scheme of Redemption—**MESSIANIC PROPHECIES** of Isaiah—Hosca—Joel—And Micah—These Prophecies were designed to support the Hebrews in their Affliction—Check the pride of their Enemies—And uphold the Honor of Jehovah—The Prophecies of Jeremiah—And Ezekiel—Nebuchadnezzar's profane Assumption and Intolerance—The Prophecies of Daniel—The Hebrews acquire a clear Knowledge of the Doctrine of Satan.

THE subversion of the throne of David, and the ruin and captivity of the Hebrew people, when regarded simply as historical events, may be reconciled to the ordinary fate of earthly empires, and be easily accounted for by a reference to internal division, and exposure to the overwhelming aggressions of Egypt and Assyria. But these causes are not sufficient to account for this calamity, when the subject is regarded in a religious aspect. The Hebrew kingdom did not rise up into national existence and prosperity under the operation of ordinary laws, nor maintain its independence so long by wisdom in council, or prowess in war. The Hebrew nation, in its origin and continued existence, was miraculous; and those who investigate its history must fully admit this truth, or reject the uniform teaching of the Bible. But when we consider the covenant promises made to the father of the faithful, their complete accomplishment in the establishment of the Israelites in Canaan, and, in connection with these, the continued Divine interposition which at the same time threw an invincible Ægis of protection over the land, and shed holy light and spiritual influence upon their religious interests;—when all this is contemplated, how can the ruin of Jerusalem, and the captivity of Israel, be accounted for? Is it indeed true that the Abrahamic covenant was a Hebrew myth? that the Mosaic economy was a system of priestcraft? and the prophetic institute a series of political adventure and intrusion? and that therefore, what

fairly brought into contact with enlightened and martial nations, as neither priestly jugglery, nor superstitious enthusiasm, could afford them protection, the Hebrews fell prostrate into the hands of their enemies? So the boasted science of learned men in the nineteenth century would have us believe. It is, indeed, seldom that they put forth their opinions in these plain and bold terms; but if their teaching is covert and insidious, it is zealous, and to a certain extent effective.

But this teaching, whatever its pretensions may be, is not sustained by a reasonable induction from known facts, nor a really learned interpretation of ancient records. Moses himself, who had been the instrument of Hebrew deliverance and preservation, and who was divinely appointed to bring into operation among them the religious economy which had been revealed from heaven,—even he, standing upon the banks of the Jordan, with the people of his charge just waiting to step into the promised inheritance, saw before him their future unfaithfulness and consequent doom; and it is very remarkable that he puts this fearful prediction into the form of a judgment which a reasonable and pious spectator should pronounce, when this national ruin was consummated: "Then shall men say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: for they went and served other gods, and worshiped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book: and the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day." *Dent. xxix, 25-28.* Here the cause of the ruin is declared co-eval, with the origin of the nation. But lest we expose ourselves to the charge of turning prophecy into history, it will be necessary to describe more particularly that religious declension which produced the captivity. This presents itself to our view under two aspects: it was, first, a fearful apostasy from God, by the adoption of an extensive scheme of idolatry; and, secondly, it exhibits those who maintained a nominal faith in Jehovah, as altogether deficient in spirituality and obedience, and therefore insincere in worship, and scandalously immoral.

It has been shown that it was a leading object of the Hebrew theocracy to raise in the world an efficient bulwark against idolatry. The institution was adapted to this end, and for a while secured it. Jerusalem, and the whole land of Israel, were, in the days of David, emphatically a country where God was "known." *Psalms lxxvi, 1.*

Whilst all the earth beside was shrouded in darkness, and all men worshiped senseless and material things, the light of the Lord rested upon the dwellings of Jacob, and Israel knew and worshiped the living and the true God. The preceding chapters have painfully proved that this elevated piety was not maintained. As a punishment for the idolatry of Solomon, the kingdom was divided, and then Israel first abandoned Jehovah, adopted the polytheism of Phenicia, and was ruined; and at length Judah, pursuing the same guilty course, was exposed to a similar fate. To the latter days of this monarchy special attention is called. Jehoram dared to introduce Heathen idolatry into Judah, accompanied with filthy and obscene rites. 2 Chron. xxi, 11. Jehoash, blasting the promise of his early days, sank also into the same abominations; and when reproved by a priest, speaking under immediate inspiration, he caused the Divine messenger to be murdered in the temple. 2 Chron. xxiv, 18-22. After some efforts made by pious princes to restore the worship of Jehovah, Ahaz, by his bold and daring impiety, counteracted all that had been done; he sacrificed his son to Moloch, and restored the abominations of the Canaanites, until at length he consummated his iniquity by removing the altar of the Lord, and erecting an idolatrous altar in the temple, and by cutting in pieces the vessels of the house of God. 2 Kings xvi, 13-15; 2 Chron. xxviii, 23-25; xxix, 19. Hezekiah endeavored to lead back the people to Jehovah; but his son and successor, Manasseh, frustrated all the hope which had arisen from his father's efforts, and made Judah worse than the Heathen. He restored all the idolatrous places which had been removed, introduced the worship of the heavenly bodies, built idolatrous altars in the house of God, practiced sorcery, and persecuted the worshipers of Jehovah until Jerusalem was filled with innocent blood. 2 Kings xxi; 2 Chron. xxxiii. This apostasy caused the captivity. During the progress of this iniquity, the fatal doom had been pronounced, and Jerusalem tottered to her fall. If the last days of Manasseh, and the pious labors of Josiah, exercised a salutary influence upon the people, these means were utterly ineffectual to check the idolatrous disposition of the apostate nation. Even in the presence of threatened punishment, while the cloud of Divine wrath was bursting over the devoted land, it is said of each of the four kings who succeeded Josiah, "He did evil in the sight of the Lord." 2 Kings xxiii, 32; 2 Chron. xxxvi, 5, 9, 12.

As the fact of this fearful apostasy is thus fully established from the historical records of sacred Scripture, we may be allowed to show the extent to which it was carried, from the teaching of the prophets. Jeremiah was called to the prophetic office in the thir-

teenth year of Josiah's reign : he therefore entered upon his sacred vocation after the second attempt of this pious king to restore the purity of Divine worship, and to bring back the people to Jehovah their God. Yet, after the sovereign had passed through the length and breadth of the land, breaking down the altars of Baalim, destroying the images, and, so far as external means could accomplish the object, abolishing idolatry, how does the messenger of the Lord address the people ? Does he admit the genuineness of their repentance, and praise their return to the service and worship of Jehovah ? No ; but, on the contrary, he arraigns their idolatry, even at this time, as national and intense. His first inspired address to them is therefore burdened with the sad message :—

“I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness,
Who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods,
And worshiped the works of their own hands.” Jer. i, 16.

And, therefore, as the prophet had reason to believe that these idolaters would destroy him by murderous persecution, as other messengers of Jehovah had been put to death, Jehovah assures him of special protection :—

“I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar,
And brazen walls against the whole land,
Against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof,
Against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.
And they shall fight against thee ;
But they shall not prevail against thee ;
For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.” Verses 18, 19.

And lest it might be supposed that God by his prophet was speaking of some temporary passionate impulse which affected the people, he shows the deliberate and irreclaimable character of their idolatry :—

“There is no hope :
No ; for I have loved strangers,
And after them will I go.
As the thief is ashamed when he is found,
So is the house of Israel ashamed ;
They, their kings, their princes,
And their priests, and their prophets,
Saying to a stock, Thou art my father ;
And to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth :
For they have turned their back unto me, and not their face :
But in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.
But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee ?
Let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble :
For according to the number of thy cities
Are thy gods, O Judah.” Chap. ii, 25-28.

And lest there should be any difficulty in reconciling the external reformation effected by Josiah with this description of the irreligious condition of the people, the prophet, after alluding to the sin and punishment of Israel, says, "Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord." Chap. iii, 10. These passages, be it observed, although selected from the writings of a prophet, are not predictions, but statements of facts, which came under his own knowledge.

But why should the revelations of God be deemed less decisive evidence of the religious state of the elect people, than the observations of men? By all who really believe the Holy Scriptures, this kind of information will, notwithstanding the wrangling of skeptics, be highly esteemed. We will therefore call attention to one portion of the prophetic writings, which, by means of direct revelation, sheds great light upon the idolatrous condition of Judah just before the destruction of Jerusalem. Ezekiel was a priest who had been carried into Babylonia, and located with many other Hebrew captives, several of them elders in Israel, by the river Chebar. There, in the reign of Zedekiah, these outcasts met together to meditate on God's covenant promises, and to pray for the preservation of Jerusalem, and the ingathering of her scattered children. "At one of their interesting prayer-meetings for the restoration of Israel, which had been held so often and so long without any prospect of brighter days, and when the faith and hopes of many of the unfortunates were waxing dim and feeble, Ezekiel, in presence of his friends, consisting of the exiled elders of Judah, was suddenly wrapt in mystic vision, and graciously shown, for his own satisfaction, as well as that of his pious associates, the reasons of God's protracted controversy with Israel, and the sad necessity there was for still dealing hardly with them."—*Kitto's Cyclopædia*, vol. i, p 409. 'This, the prophet informs us, was effected by his being "lifted up" and carried "in the visions of God to Jerusalem." Ezek. viii, 3. (See *Appendix*, note 99.) Here, as in spirit he walked through the outer court of the temple, where the people usually assembled for worship, he saw a colossal statue, which, in a strain of lofty imagination, the sacred seer calls "the image of jealousy which provoketh to jealousy." This was probably an image of Baal, "around which crowds of devotees were performing their frantic revelries, and whose forbidden ensigns were proudly blazoning on the walls and portals of His house, who had proclaimed himself a God jealous of his honor. 2 Kings xxi, 7. To this profane worship the common people were greatly addicted. Scarcely had the prophet recovered from his astonishment and horror at the open and undisguised idolatry of the multitude in that

sacred inclosure, when his celestial guide bade him turn another way, and he should see greater abominations. Leading him to that side of the court along which were ranged the houses of the priests, his conductor pointed to a mud wall, (Ezek. viii, 7,) which, to screen themselves from observation, the apostate servants of the true God had raised; and in that wall was a small chink, by widening which, he discovered a passage into a secret chamber, which was completely impervious to the rays of the sun, but which was found, on entering it, lighted up by a profusion of brilliant lamps. The sides of it were covered with numerous paintings of beasts and reptiles,—the favorite deities of Egypt; and with their eyes intently fixed on these decorations, was a conclave of seventy persons, in the garb of priests, the exact number, and in all probability the individual members, of the sanhedrim, who stood in the attitude of adoration, each holding in his hand a golden censer, containing all the costly and odoriferous materials which the pomp and magnificence of the Egyptian ritual required. There was every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel portrayed round about. Every form of animal life, from the noblest quadruped to the most loathsome reptile that spawned in Egypt, received a share of their insane homage; and the most extraordinary feature of the scene was, that the individual who appeared to be the director of these foul mysteries, the master of the ceremonies, was Jaazaniah, a descendant of that zealous scribe who had gained so much renown as the principal adviser of the good king Josiah, and whose family had for generations been regarded as the most illustrious for piety in the land. The presence of a scion of this venerated house in such a den of impurity, struck the prophet as an electric shock; and showed, better than all the other painful spectacles discovered in this chamber, to what a fearful extent idolatry had inundated the land. But the prophet was directed to turn yet again, and he would see greater abominations than they did. “Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord’s house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.” Verse 14. This, the principal deity of the Phenicians, who was often called also by that people *Adoni*, that is, “my lord,” became afterward famous in the Grecian mythology under the well-known name of Adonis. The untimely death of this hero-divinity was bewailed in an annual festival held to commemorate the event. During the seven days that this festival lasted, the Phenicians appeared to be a nation of mourners; and in every town and village a fictitious representation of Tammuz was got up for the occasion, and the whole population assembled to pour forth their unbounded sorrow. Conspicuous

among the crowd, on such occasions, a band of mercenary females directed the orgies; and, in conformity with an ancient custom of bewailing the dead at anniversaries at the doors of houses, others took their station at *the gate*, with their faces directed northward, as the sun was said to have been in that quarter of the heavens when Tammuz died. These violent efforts of mourning were always followed by scenes of the most revolting and licentious revelry, which, though not mentioned, are manifestly implied among the greater abominations which degraded this other group of idolaters.

“ Besides the worship of Baal, the animal adoration of Egypt, and the orgies of Tammuz, there was another form of superstition still, which, in Jerusalem, then almost wholly given to idolatry, had its distinguished patrons. ‘Turn thee yet again,’ said his celestial guide to the prophet, ‘and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.’ Verse 15. And he brought him ‘unto the inner court of the Lord’s house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five-and-twenty men, with their backs towards the temple of the Lord, and their faces towards the east; and they worshiped the sun towards the east.’ Perhaps, of all the varieties of superstition which had crept in among the Hebrews in that period of general decline, none displayed such flagrant dishonor to the God of Israel as *this*; for, as the most holy place was situated at the west end of the sanctuary, it was impossible for these twenty-five men to pay their homage to the rising sun without turning their backs on the consecrated place of the Divine Presence; and, accordingly, this fourth circle is introduced last, as if their employment formed the climax of abominations.”—*Kitto’s Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, vol. i, p. 409.

Thus we see the fearful extent to which Judah and Jerusalem were corrupted. Idolatry was not an evil occasionally introduced by a wicked king, and its observance enforced upon an unwilling people. On the contrary, the public mind had become alienated from Jehovah; every grade of society was affected; even the priesthood and the appointed ministers of the temple had submitted to this insane and vile pollution. The sanctuary was defiled; and, while the propitiatory remained, and the glorious shekinah rested over the cherubim, every species of idolatry had been introduced, every portion of the sacred dwelling-place of Jehovah had been desecrated; and the hidden pollutions of the temple, and the secret iniquities of priests and rulers, were more gross, revolting, and abominable than were ever portrayed upon the page of history, and called for the prescience and power of Jehovah to exhibit them to the astonishment of man.

As this evil was not only worse in its character, and, at the same time, more general in its influence, than any other, its existence and fatal results are more fully detailed. But idolatry was not the only sin of Hebrew society. There was a section or party among the people who, although they preferred the worship of Jehovah, were not sincerely devoted to his service; so that when pious princes restored the worship of the sanctuary, as it was mainly performed and attended by time-serving idolaters and disobedient, unrighteous formalists, the most sacred services were not acceptable to God. Hence Isaiah cries,—

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord:
I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts;
And I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.
Bring no more vain oblations;
Incense is an abomination unto me;
The new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with;
It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.
Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth:
They are a trouble unto me:
I am weary to bear them.” Isa. i, 11–14.

Again :—

“He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man;
He that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck;
He that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood;
He that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol.” Chap. lxvi, 3.

And just as the cloud of Divine wrath was bursting over the devoted city, Jeremiah, in the name of Jehovah, and expressing the Divine judgment, declared,—

“To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba,
And the sweet cane from a far country?
Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable,
Nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.” Jer. vi, 20.

With idolatry so prevalent, and the sacred ordinances of Jehovah thus rendered of none effect, we need not be surprised at the general spread of vice and violence, moral and social ruin. This is fully attested. “Your hands are full of blood.” “The land is full of adulterers: because of swearing the land mourneth.” “Mighty to drink wine, men of strength to mingle strong drink.” “Violence is in their hands.” They “turn aside the needy from judgment,” and “take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless.” Hence the great mass of society became corrupt, and all the ameliorating influence of religion, law, and government, was poisoned at the fountain :—

"A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land;
The prophets prophesy falsely,
And the priests bear rule by their means;
And my people love to have it so." Jer. v, 30, 31.

It was such a view of the religious condition of the Hebrews which induced the evangelical prophet to exclaim,—

"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.
From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it;
But wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." Isa. i, 5, 6.

This religious disorder, this predominance of sin, produced the ruin of the Hebrew state. It is impertinent to refer this national destruction to the rising fortunes of Egypt, or to the martial power of Assyria: faithful to God, Jerusalem would have withstood the world; paralyzed by sin, she fell prostrate beneath the power of her enemies.

As a direct and divinely attested revelation of the ways of God, scarcely any part of holy writ is fraught with more important teaching than the vision of Ezekiel, (to which we have already so largely referred,) especially as expository of the expulsion of Jehovah from his chosen sanctuary, by the infidelity and iniquity of his people. In this mystic vision, not only was the idolatry of Judah revealed, but its fearful consequences were fully developed. While the prophet looked, behold, the glorious shekinah of God, which had so long rested between the cherubim over the mercy-seat, with all these sacred types of redeeming grace, arose, as if instinct with life, passed through the sanctuary, and made a momentary pause on the threshold of the temple. Ezek. x, 4. This indication that Jehovah was about to abandon his former dwelling-place, it will be observed, took place simultaneously with the command to execute God's judgments upon the devoted city. But the Divine Glory and the cherubim again arose, and, removing from the door, hovered awhile over the east gate of the temple, and then rested over the city. Chap. x, 19; xi, 22. From thence the Divine Presence removed to the Mount of Olives, on the east side of Jerusalem. Chap. xi, 23. There a scene took place similar to that which was repeated on the same spot in the days of the incarnation. There it was, in effect, said, although the glorious shekinah was not then embodied in human flesh, "I would have gathered thy children together, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Luke xiii, 34, 35.

But, it may be asked, "Was this wickedness universal? Did none of the elect people retain their fidelity to God?" Yes. This alleviating feature in their desperate case is prominently put forward;

and the manner in which it is exhibited contains an important lesson to the Church in all ages. The faithful were not recognized and spared, on account of the name they sustained, the profession which they made, or because of any claim which they set up; but on the higher and holier ground, that, grieved at the prevalence of sin, wounded on account of the dishonor put upon Jehovah, they *sighed and wept* over the spiritual desolation of Israel. Ezek. ix, 4-6. Thus was Jehovah expelled from his own sanctuary, by the sins of his people; and by this means total ruin was brought upon the Hebrew nation.

This fearful catastrophe having destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and carried the remnant of Israel into captivity, we have now to seek the Hebrew Church in the land of the Chaldees, and to inquire into the religion of the remnant which escaped this terrible destruction.

Here it will be necessary to observe, that the Hebrews who were preserved must not be supposed to have been of the same character with the great mass of the people. There can be no reasonable doubt, that the most religious of the Hebrews were preserved from destruction, and carried into captivity; while the wicked, profane, and idolatrous met their death in the sanguinary war which preceded, and terminated in the still more sanguinary sacking of Jerusalem. That this was the case, may be inferred from the general principles of the theocracy; it cannot be supposed that the ordinary hazards of war would be allowed to operate, when Jehovah was carrying out his great controversy with his apostate people. It is probable, therefore, that in the first deportations of Hebrews, when Daniel and his companions, and, afterward, Ezekiel, were carried away, the more pious portion of the people were providentially selected; and the circumstances of the captives at Babylon and by the river Chebar, give countenance to this opinion. But, however this may be, it seems certain that, in the great convulsion which destroyed Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah, and from which a small remnant were transported to Babylon, the idolatrous and profane part of the community were destroyed. The vision of Ezekiel predictively asserts this. When the prophet saw the divinely appointed preparation for the ruin of this devoted city, a prominent part of the arrangement was the appointment of one "with a writer's inkhorn by his side," who was commanded to go through Jerusalem, and to "set a mark upon the foreheads of the men" who, concerned for the honor of Jehovah, lamented the prevalence of iniquity; and the ministers of destruction were specially charged not to come "near any man upon whom is the mark;" while all the others, with all

their families, were to be slain, without exception and without pity. Ezek. ix, 2-6. The same careful exemption of the pious, and of them alone, in this fearful destruction, is also clearly taught by Ezekiel in another part of his prophecy; where Jehovah condescends to explain the principles upon which he would conduct this great conflict with his rebellious people. "When the land sinneth grievously," so that the hand of God shall be stretched out against it, and famine or noisome beasts, the sword or pestilence, be employed to inflict the merited punishment, then, "though Noah, Daniel, and Job" were in it, they should deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only should be delivered; so that individual righteousness would avail for the personal safety of the righteous, and for them alone. (Chap. xiv, 13-21.) The entire scope of the Scriptural account, therefore, goes to prove that, by the ruin of Judah and Jerusalem, the great body of Hebrew idolaters and profane sinners were destroyed, and that the remnant which were carried into captivity, although, perhaps, not all decidedly religious, were generally devoted to the worship of Jehovah, and had some disposition to obey his will.

It becomes, then, a further interesting and important inquiry, how far the religious opinions and hopes of these preserved Hebrews were affected or changed by this national ruin and its consequences. It would seem, from a superficial glance at the subject, that these events would be likely to produce a serious effect upon the religious views and prospects of this people; and the more closely the history, religion, and peculiar circumstances of the Hebrews are studied, the greater is the probability that vast and extensive benefits will be found as the result.

One effect of the fall of Jerusalem and of the throne of Judah was, the removal of much error and unsound confidence from the Hebrew mind. No historical fact is more certain than that this people in general, and specially those of them who adhered to the worship of Jehovah, regarded Jerusalem and the regal line of David, not only as under the special protection of Jehovah, but as identified with his promised purposes of grace and mercy towards mankind. All the predictions relating to the Messiah not only seemed to associate his coming glory with the existence of the Hebrew state, but to exhibit Him as destined to succeed to the throne of David. These opinions were doubly consecrated in the judgment and expectations of the people, by their connection with the temple. This sacred building, which God had so visibly and gloriously occupied, was regarded as so identified with the accomplishment of the Divine will, as so essentially connected with the religion of Moses, and, through sacred prophecy, with the religious hopes of the world, that

the perpetuity of its existence, through all the contingencies of national convulsion, and the varied fortunes of war, was a settled doctrine of Hebrew faith: and, therefore, notwithstanding the prevalence of idolatry, and the fearful spread of iniquity, the throne and the sanctuary were regarded as the palladium of Hebrew nationality. Amid the gathering clouds of disaster and defeat, the people turned a deaf ear to the warning voice of prophecy, and set at defiance the mightiest enemies: regarding the preservation of their religious and civil polity as the great element in the purposes of God, they clung to what they called the hope of Israel, and exclaimed, "The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are these." Jer. vii, 4.

But the fallacy of these views had been exposed. Jerusalem was destroyed, the glorious temple burned with fire, the royal descendant of David lay a captive in a Babylonish dungeon. All the vain confidence of the Hebrews in the impregnable fortifications of Jerusalem, and the invincible sanctity of the temple, had been swept away. The prowess and polity of Judah had, to every practical purpose, perished. But, while this terrible ruin confounded vain confidence, exposed the fallacy of erroneous opinions, and destroyed the whole fabric in which the hope of Israel was enshrined, was this hope itself destroyed? Most assuredly not. Disaster and defeat, ruin and captivity, with all their frightful results, were powerless against the principle of Hebrew confidence. Israel, walking through the ruins of Zion, surveying the ashes of the sanctuary, surrounded by the desolations of everything great and noble in the land of their fathers, and bearing the chains of captivity to the land of the Chaldees, still felt that they were heirs to the covenant promise of Jehovah; knew, beyond the approach of doubt, that the most glorious development of the Divine purpose respecting mankind was identified with the destiny of their race; and, therefore, although confounded at the magnitude of their woes, and ignorant of the manner in which their present state and prospects could be reconciled to their faith and hope, they clung "to the sure mercies of David," and eagerly bent their united mind to unravel the mystery of their religious condition. The ruin of the Hebrew nation and polity, in its religious influence upon the remnant who were preserved, went to convict them of great and numerous errors in their interpretation of the covenant promises, and sent them to Babylon to purify the national faith, and reconstruct their hope of redemption by a close and constant submission to the revealed truth of God.

It may be doubted whether the representatives of the house of Jacob had ever before been placed in circumstances so favorable to

the attainment of clear, comprehensive, and religious views of their covenant relation to Jehovah, as at this period of calamity and sorrow. Not only were they, as a whole, more serious, pious, and, from the force of circumstances, more generally disposed to study the great subject of promised redemption;—for which they were also much better prepared, for they were less affected by party and national strife and violence;—they possessed, also, in the collected writings of the prophets, a new and important source of light, which had not been previously available. The discourses of these inspired men had been heard, by their fathers and themselves, as earnest dissuasives from idolatry and wickedness, and exhortations to obedience and holiness. But, as spoken discourses, they would not be likely to present to the mind of the hearer the full amount of truth which they contained, respecting the person and work of the Messiah, and the promised redemption. This must always be regarded as the centre-point of revealed religion. As, in gospel times, those have the clearest and fullest apprehension of the grace of God who have obtained the most distinct and perfect knowledge of the person, character, mission, and offices of Christ; so, under the preceding dispensation, although a general acquaintance with the moral and ceremonial law, as enforced and explained by Moses, might afford much information, yet the genius and design of this economy could only be fully realized by those who regarded it in connection with the promised Messiah. Thus, real and effective religious knowledge, even in those times, depended mainly upon a just, consistent, and believing apprehension of the prophetic revelations concerning the promised Redeemer.

It becomes necessary, therefore, to ascertain the amount of information, which the Hebrews possessed respecting the Messiah, at the time of the captivity. The increase of this knowledge, which could only be given by direct revelation, was communicated gradually to the ancient church. In addition to the portion of revealed truth which the patriarchs possessed on this important subject, it is very probable that increasing light was cast on the personality and character of the Messiah by the prophecy of Jacob: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Gen. xlix, 10. If the early Hebrews took the same view of this text as was afterward entertained, this probability would amount to certainty; for Jonathan Ben Uzziel renders the corresponding part of the passage, "Until the time when King Messiah shall come."

It is, however, certain that the personality of the Saviour is clearly set forth in several Psalms, which were written before the

death of Solomon. (See Psalms ii, xlv, lxxii, and cx.) Yet it was in the noon-day of prophetic revelation that the Messiah was fully placed in the vision of the people. Isaiah stands pre-eminent as the announcer of these divine communications. Before particular allusion is made to these, it may be remarked that, in the earlier revelations relating to this subject, the kingly character of the Messiah is generally prominent: he is to save mankind by a powerful arm, to gather the people by sovereign strength. Here, however, we find him exhibited as a Prophet and a Priest. Another important element of these revelations is the clear and distinct assertion of the sufferings of the Messiah. This idea, as connected with the work of redemption, appears to have obtained from the beginning; but the son of Amoz first brings it out as an important doctrine of Old Testament faith. The following has been given as an outline of the prophecies contained in the Book of Isaiah respecting the Messiah: "A scion of David, springing from his family after it has fallen into a very low state, but being also of Divine nature, shall, at first in lowliness, but as a Prophet filled with the Spirit of God, proclaim the Divine doctrine, develop the law in truth, and render it the animating principle of national life. He shall, as High Priest, by his vicarious suffering and his death, remove the guilt of his nation, and that of other nations, and finally rule as a mighty King, not only over the covenant people, but over all nations of the earth, who will subject themselves to his peaceful sceptre, not by violent compulsion, but induced by love and gratitude. He will make both the moral and physical consequences of sin to cease; the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; and all enmity, hatred, and destruction shall be removed, even from the brute creation. This is the survey of the Messianic preaching by Isaiah; of which he constantly renders prominent those portions which were most calculated to impress the people under the then existing circumstances. The first part of Isaiah is directed to the whole people; consequently, the glory of the Messiah is here dwelt upon. The fear lest the kingdom of God should be overwhelmed by the power of heathen nations, is removed by pointing out the glorious King to come, who would elevate the now despised, and apparently mean, kingdom of God above all the kingdoms of this world. In the second part, which is more particularly addressed to the ἐκλογή, '*the elect*,' than to the whole nation, the prophet exhibits the Messiah more as a Teacher and High Priest. The prophet here preaches righteousness through the blood of the servant of God, who will support the weakness of sinners, and take upon himself their sorrows."—*Hengstenberg in Kitto's Cyclopædia*, vol. ii, p. 50.

Besides the revelations of Isaiah, several of the minor prophets had communicated important information respecting the promised Redeemer. Hosea has not given us many passages which can be selected as direct predictions of the Messiah. As a learned author has observed, reference to this Divine Person "lies more in the spirit of this prophet's allusions, than in the letter. Hosea's Christology appears written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, on the fleshly tables of his heart." The future conversion of the people, their glorious privilege in becoming sons of God, and the faithfulness of the original promise to Abraham, that the number of his spiritual seed should be as the sand of the sea, are among the oracles which this inspired writer placed on record, to be accomplished under the glorious reign of the Messiah.

Joel, also, cast light upon the reign of grace, and wrote a glorious prediction of that special outpouring of the Holy Spirit which should distinguish the kingdom of Messiah. Here the commencement of the gospel dispensation is clearly shown, the Divine influence which should sustain it described, and its extension to all ages, classes, and nations of men predictively set forth. Joel ii, 28-32.

Micah does not very specially refer, in a direct manner, to the spiritual work of the Messiah; yet by a single sentence, of most remarkable import, he directed the attention of his countrymen to the promised Redeemer. Micah v, 2. In this passage he declared the Divinity of the Saviour by asserting his Eternity. He exhibited the kingly dignity of the Messiah under the title of Ruler; and he at the same time pointed out his connection with the lineage of David, by fixing on Bethlehem as the place of his birth. The reference of this prophecy to the Messiah is so obvious, that proof of its admitted application is scarcely required. That proof, however, is abundantly given in the interview of the magi with Herod, on the occasion of the birth of Christ.

All these inspired revelations were now in the hands of the captive Hebrews. (See *Appendix*, note 100.) Here they had a series of Divine communications, all recognizing the validity of the Mosaic law, and, indeed, based upon it; all divinely attested by the fulfillment of numerous predictions, emanating from the same men, making a part of the same prophecies, and which had been already accomplished. Assyria and Egypt, Babylon and Syria, Tyre and Damascus, Israel and Judah, had all been the objects of prophetic declaration; and these predictions had been so far accomplished, as, in the most incontestable manner, to establish the Divine authority of these sacred writings.

But while the Hebrews were led, by the pressure of their calami-

ties, to study the prophetic revelations of Jehovah, on the other hand, their subjugation exposed them to the scorn and contempt of the Heathen. According to the prevalent opinions of the age, the conquest of one nation by another was supposed to indicate the superior potency of the deities worshiped by the victorious people. The language of Sennacherib shows that this sentiment was entertained by the enemies of the Hebrew nation; and hence the capture of Jerusalem was in all probability regarded as a mighty triumph of the gods of Babylon. It is a fact worthy of observation, that the prejudicial influence of this notion upon Hebrew piety was contemplated and provided for in the revelations of inspired prophecy. In that lofty strain of sacred song, prescient through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the mind of the prophet, borne along under Divine influence, perceived the remote events of history as if present, and passing immediately under his eye. (See *Appendix*, note 101.) In this manner Isaiah not only asserts the matchless power of Jehovah, but even exults over the idol gods of the proud nation which he saw as having vanquished and desolated Judea. "Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth;" and, as if this language was not sufficiently indicative of the impotence of these objects of vain adoration, the prophet proceeds, in language breathing the most contemptuous defiance and derision, to describe these superior deities of Babylon as so unable to save their country or themselves, that, when carried away into captivity, "they are a burden to the weary beast." Isaiah xlv, 1. Thus did the holy seer protest against the pride of his country's foes, by denouncing defeat, shame, and ruin to the objects of their vain confidence and worship.

But these vivid predictions of the prophets not only afforded means for showing the folly of idolatry, and the vanity of those idols in which Babylon proudly trusted; they had a still more important bearing upon the faith and hope of Israel. As an illustration of this, we may refer to the latter part of Isaiah's sixth chapter. Here the religious obduracy of Israel, arising out of neglected means of grace, and a determined perseverance in sin, notwithstanding long-continued Divine interposition, is explicitly set forth. Verses 9, 10. From this appalling vision Isaiah turned to God, and anxiously inquired how long this awful desolation was to continue. The first part of the answer which he received (verses 11, 12) shed increasing darkness on the prospect. He was told that this visitation would continue until it had produced entire national ruin, "until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate," &c. But the prophet's ken went beyond all this: he not only saw the ruin of his land, but also clearly perceived in the dis-

tance an assurance of future revival and recovery; and, seeing this, his faith does not falter; he fills up the picture, and places it on record for the comfort of his countrymen in their affliction, and for the permanent instruction of all future ages. The captive Hebrews therefore saw, even in their heaviest calamities, a prospect of future deliverance and exaltation. They saw, in intimate connection with the prophecies that had been accomplished in their humiliation and captivity, explicit predictions, which assured them that this band of exiles was a holy seed from which the Hebrews should again rise into a nation; and, what was of still greater importance, that the purpose of God should yet be accomplished, and, consequently, that the house of Jacob should yet fulfill its glorious destiny, in contributing to the blessing of all the nations of the earth.

But the Hebrew captives were not only aided, by the immense extent and peculiar explicitness of preceding revelations, to study the true nature of their covenant relation to Jehovah, and acquire just views of the great economy of grace; their inquiries were further directed by continued prophetic assistance, and Divine interposition. Blessed as the house of Jacob had been with special revelation throughout their national history, it may be questioned whether they were ever so richly visited with extraordinary means as in this season of calamity and sorrow. It will be necessary to review these, as nearly as possible, in the order and under the aspects in which they presented themselves to the captive Hebrews.

The inspired discourses of Jeremiah may first be mentioned. This prophet not only shared all the dangers and sorrows arising out of the political convulsions and sanguinary wars which led to the destruction of Jerusalem, and throughout all constantly communicated the Divine will to the people; he, with equal ardor and zeal, continued to afford the captive remnant prophetic guidance and information. As great numbers of Jews had been located in Babylonia before the total ruin of the kingdom of Judah, so these duties of warning the people at home, and directing the captives abroad, were performed simultaneously by this man of God. And while, for the benefit of those Hebrews who were thus early carried to the land of the Chaldees, Ezekiel is taken in spirit to Jerusalem, and shown the impending doom of the holy city, Jeremiah, living in the midst of Jewish apostasy, is commissioned to write lessons of instruction to the children of the captivity. His first effort is to persuade them that, in centring their national and religious hope in the preservation of Jerusalem, they greatly err. He, on the contrary, by a striking parable, assures them that the king, the court, the city, and its wicked inhabitants, are doomed to total ruin; that the living

germ of Hebrew nationality and religion is with the captives in Babylonia. Jer. iv. This lesson is further enforced, and they are warned against the vain hopes, which false prophets and diviners encouraged, of their speedy restoration, by the explicit assurance that the term of their captivity should be seventy years. Chap. xxix. The prophet is commissioned still further to show the certainty of Israel's restoration, and the glorious revival of religion which should follow that wonderful event. Chap. xxx, xxxi. Another most remarkable portion of this series of prophecy denounces the approaching ruin of Babylon, intermixed and contrasted with predictions concerning the redemption of Israel and Judah, who were not, like their predecessors, to be finally extirpated, but to survive, and, upon their repentance, to be pardoned and restored. It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the magnitude of these Divine communications. Here, while Jerusalem yet exists as the capital of Judah, and Zedekiah sits on the throne of David,—when Babylon triumphs in all the plenitude of her power, and is proceeding in her resistless career of conquest,—the prescience of Jehovah, assuming the coming ruin of the Hebrew city and kingdom as accomplished, declares the total destruction of their tyrant conquerors, and asserts the irrevocable perdition to which the glory of the Chaldees was doomed. This is not declared in terms, but shown by a significant sign. The messenger sent by the prophet to read this communication to the captive Hebrews was told, after having so done, to bind a stone to the book, and to cast it into the river Euphrates, as an emblem of the perpetual ruin that should come upon Babylon. When these predictions had been attested by the consummated ruin of the Hebrew state, the captive sons of Israel must have pondered over these prophecies with deep and anxious thought, seeing that they involved the civil and religious destinies of the house of Jacob. And they would find here not only positive promises of national recovery, but equally explicit declarations of the final redemption of Israel and of the world, by the accomplishment of God's great purposes of grace in the incarnation and kingdom of the Messiah. Chap. xxxi, 31–36.

While Jeremiah was thus occupied amid the convulsions of the dissolving monarchy, and the tottering of the doomed city, in guiding the faith and strengthening the hope of the captive Hebrews, Ezekiel, who was located among them on the banks of the river Chebar, was under the same inspiration, carrying out the same object. After having, in the most marvelous manner, announced the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem on the very day that it took place, and predicted the conquest and destruction of the city, the deportation of its surviving inhabitants, the flight and cap-

ture of Zedekiah, and that he should not be slain, but be carried to Babylon, although he should not see it,—prophecies which were all literally accomplished, this sacred seer declared the restoration of the Hebrew people. Ezek. xxxvi, xxxvii. In these predictions we may particularly observe the total ruin of the Hebrew nation which is exhibited. The political condition of the seed of Jacob is symbolized by dry bones in the valley. No image could more clearly show that death had certainly taken place, and produced all its fatal results. The Hebrew state was not reduced to weakness; it was totally subverted. It had not only lost its independence; a skeleton of its national institutions had not been preserved. The capital was burned with fire, the king lay in a dungeon, the people were scattered in isolated families over the land of their conquerors. This entire national destruction was thus insisted on, to show that preceding prophecies had been accomplished, and to prevent the people from regarding the national resuscitation as their own act. The restoration is then predicted as a special result of Divine interposition. The purpose of God is declared,—the ministration of prophecy the means, the power of the Spirit of God the efficient cause. Then, under the figure of the two sticks, the union of Judah and Israel is set forth, and the return of a remnant of all the tribes predicted. And, lastly, all this is associated with the spiritual redemption of Israel, and the glorious consummation of the “covenant of peace.” Ezek. xxxvii, 15–28.

While the captive Hebrews were recovering from the shock which their national ruin had inflicted, and were studying their religious hopes and future destiny in the collected writings of the prophets, their faith was subjected to a very severe trial, from which, however, they were delivered by a most gracious and effective interposition. The case of king Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image, with the terrible punishment and miraculous deliverance of three noble young Hebrews, was narrated in the last chapter. But the important question which commentators have scarcely touched, and which historians generally leave unexplained, namely, the precise object of the king, and the religious effect of this incident upon the Hebrews, was reserved for this place, as the most appropriate for its discussion. (See *Appendix*, note 102.) A careful consideration of the whole subject has made it sufficiently evident that the king of Babylon, having succeeded in all his wars, and established his empire over all western Asia and Egypt, was induced, by the pride of his heart and insatiable ambition, to ascribe to himself Divine honor. In doing this, he did not put himself into the common category of Heathen divinities; but, finding in his own and every other ancient

nation traditions of a promised Divinity, who was to be born into the world, and who, by establishing a kingdom, and bringing all mankind under his government, should save them from the power of evil, and introduce universal happiness among men ; he ascribed this honor to himself, and claimed to be this great predicted ONE, with the universality of whose sovereign power the hope of the world was identified. For the purpose of carrying out this profane design, the golden image was made ; and as it was important that all persons intrusted with power and authority throughout the empire should recognize the king in this divine character, and thus not only pay him political obedience, but also give him a solemn pledge of religious fealty, they were all specially summoned from the capital and the provinces to the plain of Dura, for this express purpose.

It is easy to see the effect of all this upon the grand principle of the Hebrew religion. From the days of their father Abraham, his seed had looked forward to the advent of the promised Redeemer, as the great hope of their family and of the world. Every additional ray of light which inspired prophets had communicated gave increasing power to this faith, and intensity to this hope. Even the ruin of the Hebrew kingdoms, by calling off the trust of Israel from visible and external means, led them the more deeply to cherish the great predictive promise of revelation, and to place their undivided confidence in its certain accomplishment. In this expectation the Hebrews were strengthened by the traditions of every Heathen people. Everywhere they saw evidences that the primitive promise was divine. Yet none but themselves had explicit and authenticated information respecting the character of this promised Redeemer, and of the kingdom which he should establish in the world. To the Hebrews, therefore, this profane assumption of Nebuchadnezzar would be the most violent aggression ever made upon the prime article of their faith. They saw that, if this meeting of all the dignitaries of the empire took place, and this golden image of the king, in the character of the promised seed of the woman, (and therefore as a Divine and universal sovereign,) was thus recognized and worshiped, although the judgment of a few pious Jews might object and protest against this profane arrogance, the united intellect and influence of the most important nations of the world would regard the promise of a Divine King as fulfilled in the sovereign of Babylon ; a result which would be fatal to the expectation of a Messiah, and therefore extensively prejudicial to the cause of truth and righteousness.

But while Nebuchadnezzar indulged in the most enormous expenditure, and employed his utmost policy and power to effect his

object, it was most signally defeated by the special interposition of God. Three young Hebrews, having been appointed to important offices in the government of the province of Babylon, were, in consequence, summoned amongst the official dignitaries of the empire to take a part in this gorgeous ceremonial. They nobly refused the required adoration, and were, in consequence, cast into "the burning fiery furnace." This daring resistance and severe punishment fixed the attention of the king, the court, and all the assembled mass of intellect, authority, and power, upon the fate of these Hebrews. And here an event took place which changed the aspect of the entire proceeding. Watching the interior of the furnace, the king saw these young men walking unhurt in the midst of the fire. This miraculous preservation would in itself have been a terrible condemnation of the pride, impiety, and cruelty of the king, and a glorious vindication of the Hebrew faith. But the monarch saw more than this: he saw in the flaming furnace a fourth person, who was, through an irresistible impulse on the conscience of the arrogant tyrant, declared by himself to be the very SON OF GOD, whose dignity and glory he had so vainly attempted to ascribe to himself. The result was decisive. Impelled by Almighty Power, he proceeded to close this eventful drama. The three martyrs are delivered, their faith vindicated and honored by an imperial decree, and the assembled multitude dismissed to their respective homes, under a deep conviction that the pretension of the king was as vain as it was impious, and that the promise of a Divine Redeemer was miraculously attested as pertaining solely to the Hebrew people. The cardinal doctrine of revealed truth was thus fully vindicated, and the faith and hope of Israel established, by this glorious manifestation of the Son of God. How far the full bearing of this miracle was apprehended by the Heathen princes of the Babylonish empire, we cannot decide; but its effect upon the Hebrew mind must have been most important. They could not fail to perceive that, although chastised for their iniquities, and groaning in a strange land under the rod of the oppressor, God had not forgotten his covenant, but continued to watch over them with a view to their ultimate deliverance; that, although suffering in the fiery furnace of affliction, their Redeemer had identified his own honor with the safety of his people, and would come down and walk with them in the fire to sustain the cause of his truth, and prepare the way for the introduction of his kingdom.

The faith of the captive Hebrews was still further aided by the extensive prophetic revelations given through Daniel, respecting the several great empires which were destined to succeed each other

from that time, until the kingdom of Messiah should be established in the earth.

The first of these remarkable communications was given as an interpretation of a dream, by which the king had been much excited and alarmed. Here, under the figure of a huge image, composed of different metals, four great empires are predicted to succeed each other. The first of these is distinctly stated to be the Babylonian kingdom, as established by Nebuchadnezzar. The different qualities and powers by which these successive governments should be distinguished are briefly but clearly shown. And, what is of prime importance in the case, the kingdom which the God of heaven had promised to set up among men was to be raised under the fourth of these successive great monarchies. Dan. ii. Our limits forbid a detailed exposition of the importance of this prophecy; but it will be seen, by every serious inquirer after truth, that this single chapter sheds a flood of light upon the absorbing subject of the Divine government of this world. It shows, that, however mighty the power of kings, or glorious the dignity of empires, they are all the gift of God, the developments of his will; that they have their being only by his fiat. These prophecies show that all the arrangements of temporal sovereignty exist in subserviency to the kingdom of God; that the reign of Messiah is the crowning act in the destiny of this world. This portion of holy writ rebukes, with infinite power, the rebellious intellect and prostituted learning which teaches, that the career of the Hebrews derives its character and course from the varying influences of the great nations with which they successively came into contact. Here the truth is apparent, that the most high God doeth what he will among the nations of mankind.

With these revelations of providence, these expositions of the purposes of grace, these explanations of the covenant which Jehovah had made with Abraham, and successively confirmed to Isaac, Jacob, and David, the Hebrews spent nearly fifty years of their captivity. At the close of this period, as the term of their deliverance drew nigh, and a new race of men had risen up to form the great body of the Hebrew people, the substance of the prophecy of the four great empires is repeated in another form to the mind of the same prophet, in his vision of four large beasts arising out of the sea. Chap. vii. This figurative prediction was, like the former, divinely explained, and thus shown to be identical with the four sections of the image; the ten horns of the fourth beast being, like the ten toes of the image, intended to exhibit the ten kingdoms into which the last great monarchy should be divided. And this prophecy, like the former, also gives the greatest prominence to the kingdom of Messiah.

Again: Daniel was favored with another revelation, which foretold by name the conquest of the Medo-Persian empire by the Greeks, (see *Appendix*, note 103,) and the persecution which the people of God should suffer from a sovereign of this race. Chap. viii.

But all those communications were surpassed by yet more ample and splendid revelations, which were made to the mind of Daniel; by which the darkness of the future was removed, and the prophet taught how and when God's benign purposes of providence and redemption should be fully carried into effect. This man of God was now far advanced in life; he had seen many of his own predictions accomplished; and, knowing from the prophecies of Jeremiah that the captivity was to terminate at the expiration of seventy years, he fasted and prayed, earnestly entreating the Lord to pity and to pardon the remnant of his people, and to accomplish in them the purposes of his grace. Whilst he thus prayed, an angel was sent from heaven to assure the prophet that all this should certainly be done, and to give him ample information respecting the time and manner of its accomplishment.

This illustrious prophecy consists of two parts, the first bearing upon the history, the second referring exclusively to the religion, of the Hebrews and the world. Both are very important. By the first, the prophet was assured that the predicted restoration of his people to their own land should certainly take place. This is not directly asserted, but rather assumed. The time of "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" is the chronological foundation of the whole prophecy; this is the point from whence the computation begins. It is then positively stated, that the city and the walls "shall be built again," although in times of trouble and difficulty. And, further, it is plainly declared, that in seventy weeks of years, or four hundred and ninety years from the issuing of this edict to rebuild Jerusalem, Messiah, the anointed Prince, should appear. (See *Appendix*, note 104.) Taken in connection with preceding revelations, this information is sufficient to define the expectation which then existed in the Hebrew mind. Here every uncertainty as to the fact of the Redeemer's coming is removed; the intervening period is measured; the giving of the commandment, the building of the street and the wall in a season of trouble, are well-defined links in the chain: so that, whatever doubt might yet rest upon important and interesting circumstances connected with this great subject, the certainty of the Messiah's coming, and the chronology of that event, were here settled; and the captive Hebrews were not only encouraged to anticipate their early return to Jerusalem, but to see, at a given distance from that time, the ap-

pearing of Him who was at once the end of their history and the object of their faith.

But this glorious revelation not only removed all doubt from the cardinal point of Hebrew faith, by asserting the precise time of the Messiah's advent; it did more; it cast a flood of light upon the great object of his coming, and clearly revealed the immediate results of his mission. This information is given in six particulars. 1. "*To finish the transgression.*" The word here rendered "finish," signifies, "to cancel, to annihilate;" destroying or removing the effects of anything. "Transgression" is in the singular number, and the reference appears to be to the first, the original transgression. This clause, therefore, exhibits the Messiah as redeeming mankind from the penal consequences of Adam's sin; showing, that as, from "the transgression" of the first man, a flood of evil overspread the world, so the Messiah should open a fountain of life, which would flow as wide, and possess a power to heal all this evil. These words, therefore, briefly enunciate the general influence of the Messiah's work, which is so clearly explained at large by the apostle Paul. Rom. v, 12-21. 2. "*To make an end of sins.*" Here the religious character of Messiah's mission is unequivocally declared. Sin, in all its wide extent and varied forms, is the enemy which He assails. It was the great object of his coming, without any compromise, to make an end of all sins, to teach the duty, and impart the power, of rendering an acceptable obedience to the law of God. 3. "*To make reconciliation for iniquity.*" The word here rendered "reconciliation," is generally translated "atonement." It is, in fact, the term which is used to signify the expiatory effect of the blood of sacrifice under the law. The devout Hebrew could, therefore, scarcely mistake its meaning; and to his mind this prophetic revelation would distinctly assert, that the Messiah should offer unto God a perfect atonement, available for all iniquity. 4. "*To bring in everlasting righteousness.*" By this clause the real, inward, and, consequently, perpetual righteousness of the gospel appears to be described. It asserts, that the character of Messiah's kingdom shall not be conventional or ceremonial righteousness, but a real conformity to the mind and will of God; and that, hence, it shall never give place to any other manifestation of grace, it being the actual accomplishment of God's designs of mercy respecting man. 5. "*To seal up the vision and prophecy.*" This may either mean, to finish, to complete the canon of revelation; or, as seems more probable, to give Divine attestation to the predictions which had been given respecting the person and work of the Messiah. In this sense the word is frequently used by sacred writers. (See Jer. xxxii,

10; Esther viii, 8, 10; Neh. ix, 38.) And no attestation could have been given to prophecy more glorious or complete, than their perfect fulfillment in the person, character, and work of Christ. 6. "*To anoint the Most Holy.*" This is perhaps the most remarkable clause in this wonderful prophecy. The holy of holies, where Jehovah dwelt between the cherubim, and accepted the blood of sacrifice, as it was sprinkled on the propitiatory below, as an atonement for the sins of the people, was the centre of Hebrew religion. This was, indeed, the dwelling-place of their covenant God; and to the restoration of this holy place the ardent desire and earnest hopes of Daniel and his devout associates were directed. But these things were "figures of things in the heavens." They symbolized the work and atonement of Christ, and shadowed forth the high privileges which Messiah should procure for the faithful. What, then, does this language of the prophet import? Its force and meaning are lost in the translation. In the following verse we read, "Messiah the Prince;" and this phrase conveys to the mind much more force and meaning than would have been realized if the terms were translated, "the Anointed the Prince." By the term "Messiah" we understand, not simply one who has been anointed, but, especially and emphatically, God's long-promised and appointed ONE, who is our Redeemer. In the clause under consideration, the term rendered "anoint," is precisely the verb agreeing to the adjective in the following verse, which is very properly carried, untranslated, into our version, "Messiah." If, therefore, our translators had acted consistently, they would have rendered this clause "to MESSIANIZE the Most Holy:" this gives the sense. The prophecy speaks of the consummation of the Divine purpose in the removal of all that was merely typical, and the establishment of the fullness and reality of the scheme of redemption. The prediction of the text under consideration was, therefore, fulfilled when that great event took place; which was shown to John in the visions of the Apocalypse, when, upon the throne of grace in the heavens, surrounded by living cherubim, (the representatives of the faithful,) he saw "a Lamb as it had been slain" in the midst of the throne. This glorious consummation of type and prophecy presents to the mind a *Messianized* holy of holies.

How far the Hebrews apprehended all the instruction which these successive revelations were calculated to impart, cannot now be determined. This would depend upon individual diligence, devotedness, and faith. It will, however, be evident, that abundant means were placed within their reach for correcting all the erroneous notions which had prevailed, and for their acquiring clear and large

views of the promised redemption, and of the future course and destiny of their nation. But, while a measure of this light would fall upon the public mind, and thus tend to direct and elevate the national purpose and expectation, it cannot be doubted that clear and consistent views of the spirituality and saving efficacy of this redemption would be confined to the limited number among them who were truly pious, and, therefore, favored with faith to apprehend, with more or less distinctness, the true nature of the economy of grace.

But the Hebrews, during their captivity in Chaldea, not only obtained more full and correct opinions respecting the person and work of the promised Messiah; they also certainly acquired more enlarged and correct views of the personality, character, and influence of Satan. (See *Appendix*, note 105.) As a proof of this fact, and an illustration of the nature and extent of the change which, during this period, took place in the opinions of the Hebrew people on this subject, reference may be made to the different manner in which the same event is narrated before and after the captivity. In the second Book of Samuel, (chap. xxiv, 1,) there is an account of the sin of David in numbering the people of Israel. It is given in these words: "The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah." Here we have the temptation described, not only as permitted by God, but as originating in him, and emanating from him: a view which, although it produces great difficulty as to the harmony of action in the Divine perfections, is in perfect accordance with the sentiments which at this time prevailed among the Hebrews respecting the agency of evil spirits, who were regarded as acting under the immediate direction and control of the Almighty; and hence He is said to do what was done by them. In the first Book of Chronicles, which was compiled after the captivity, this same circumstance is narrated thus: "And SATAN stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." Chap. xxi, 1. In this version, the result of the recently acquired information is seen; and its effect is to give a full theological sense to the language. The first text informs us of the proximate cause of the calamity, in the anger of the Lord against Israel, by which he was induced to permit the temptation; the second exhibits the origin of the evil in the mind of Satan, and his active agency in the temptation of David. The attainment of this information would have an important influence upon the religious views of the Hebrew people. As the acquisition of a sound principle in science is valuable, not only as an element of acquired truth, but also as a means to further progress; so clear views of any doctrine

in theology, besides their natural tendency to correct and elevate the mind, shed the light of truth over every cognate subject, and impart a more perfect knowledge of the entire range of revealed verity.

By these means the remnant of Judah and Israel found the season of the captivity and sorrow one of great religious instruction and advancement. They had been deprived of much national glory; but they had realized a deeper interest in revealed truth, and a clearer understanding of covenant mercy. They had lost their *'status* among earthly nations; but they had been more fully recognized as the elect people of God. How far they improved these religious opportunities, our future investigations will show.

CHAPTER X.

THE HISTORY OF THE HEBREWS FROM THE RESTORATION TO
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENCE.

JUDEA, after the Restoration of the Hebrews, a Province of the Persian Empire, and subject to Syria—After Nehemiah, the High Priest is invested with the civil Government—Joiada High Priest—Succeeded by his Son Jonathan—Whose Brother, endeavoring to supplant him, is killed in the Temple—Bagoses profanes the Sanctuary, and levies a Tax upon Sacrifices—Jaddus High Priest—Refuses to supply Food to the Army of Alexander—Who threatens Jerusalem—The City wonderfully saved from his Anger—~~and~~ *lamed* ~~assured by him~~—On the Partition of the Macedonian Monarchy, Judea assigned to Lamedon—Taken from him by Ptolemy—From whom it is wrested by Antigonus—Judea restored to Ptolemy, and attached to Egypt—Simon the Just, High Priest—Succeeded by Eleazar—Antigonus of Soccho President of the great Synagogue—Manasses, Son of Jaddus, High Priest—Onias, the Son of Simon the Just, succeeds to the High Priesthood—His Covetousness perils the State—Which is saved by the Address of his Nephew Joseph—Simon II. High Priest—The profane Attempt of Philopater—~~Defeated~~—His Persecution of the Jews—Judea conquered by Antiochus, and again united to the Kingdom of Syria—Onias III. High Priest—Factionous Conduct of Simon, Governor of the Temple—Jason, by Treachery, obtains the Deposition of his Brother, and is appointed High Priest—He introduces Grecian Manners, and corrupts the People—Is supplanted by Menelaus—Onias III. murdered—Jerusalem stormed by Antiochus, and the Temple spoiled—The Jewish Religion proscribed—And a bloody Persecution begun—Mattathias and his Sons resist this Tyranny—Mattathias, dying, is succeeded by Judas—Who, after long and desperate Efforts, obtains Possession of Jerusalem—Purifies the Temple, and restores holy Worship—Alcimus High Priest—Judas slain—His Brother John cut off—Jonathan Maccabeus conducts the War—He is seduced by Treachery, and made captive—Simon Maccabeus succeeds as Captain-General—He obtains the Independence of his Country—*7116 r r r* X
Chronological Table.

THE Hebrew people had just emerged from a series of calamities, such as no nation had ever suffered, that afterward recovered its wealth, independence, and power. But in this, as in previous parts of their history, the national annals bear clear and incontestable proofs of special Divine interposition.

In all their ruin, captivity, and desolation, Jehovah, by repeated manifestations of his presence and power, had clearly shown their conquerors and tyrants that, although the Hebrews had grievously sinned, and were consequently subjected to all this suffering and sorrow, they were, nevertheless, regarded by him as his people. Hence, when the faithful three were cast into the fire, his presence was with them; when Daniel was exposed to the fury of the lions, the angel of the Lord saved him; while a great number of predictions of the highest order attested the important fact, that the secret of the Lord was with his people.

We refer particularly to this latter circumstance as shedding a halo of supernatural light and glory over the future history and des-

tinies of the nation. When Daniel, by the word of the Lord, explained the first dream of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon stood, in martial power and political splendor, without an equal, and almost without a rival; for if Media still possessed the eastern moiety of the old Assyrian dominions, its pretensions were insignificant in comparison with those of Babylon, augmented and enriched as it was by the gigantic efforts and continued successes of Nebuchadnezzar.

But, notwithstanding this, at the time when Nehemiah governed in Judea, the first section of Daniel's prophecies had been completely fulfilled. The head of gold, with all its energy, honor, and pride, had passed away; the breast and arms of silver, shown in the more broad and substantial, but less gorgeous, empire of Persia, had taken its place, and ruled over Asia and Egypt. This fact not only explained to those who held the sacred books the whole scope of these predictions, it also attested their truth, and impressed on them all the seal of unquestioned validity.

A full recognition of these facts will enable us to form a correct estimate of the true position of the Hebrews at this important period of their history. We have already seen, that although to a considerable extent intrusted with self-government, they were, notwithstanding, an integral province of the Persian empire; and, as such, were not only subject to the imperial court, but also amenable to the governor of Syria. Yet, under the teaching of these prophecies, they knew that Jerusalem was the only seat of permanent power; that from Zion should go forth a law, which, although, as yet, obscure in its agency, manifestation, and development, should at length control and subdue the whole world to its dominion. And while the Hebrews of that day knew themselves to be heirs of the everlasting covenant, they also knew that the state and power of Persia, instead of militating against these views, established their truth. Those who had the direction of the civil and religious affairs of the Hebrews had therefore the means of knowing, not only that the great power to which they were subject was exposed to change and disaster, but that it must be subverted, and pass away, to be supplanted by another and another, until four successive great empires should rise and fall, and the kingdom of God be at last set up on the earth.

In those circumstances the emancipated Hebrews commenced a new chapter in their political, social, and religious history. If they had fully improved their privileges, lived in devoted obedience to Jehovah, the world would even then have seen the purpose of God accomplished in his own way. But, alas! despite the gracious interpositions of which they had been the subjects, iniquity prevailed.

We have no information respecting Nehemiah, after the completion of his reforms. Whether he remained as governor of Judea, or returned to Persia; whether he died soon after, or lived many years; neither the sacred text nor Josephus informs us; the latter only saying, that "he came to a great age, and then died."—*Ant.*, b. xi, ch. v, sect. 8. Here it may be observed, the light of revelation is withdrawn from the history: we have no further an authoritative guide; and henceforth we must rely on Josephus, the Maccabees, and other collateral authorities.

After the death of Nehemiah, no other lay governor was appointed over Judea. This is a remarkable circumstance. Ezra* and Nehemiah had so benefited their own country, and so nobly carried out the views of the sovereign state, that it might be thought no other mode of government could operate so favorably for the public weal. These men were, indeed, first-rate specimens of human nature. Irrespective of their religion, their intellect, energy, patriotism, and public spirit, place them in respectable comparison with the finest characters of classic antiquity.

Eliashib having died before Nehemiah, his son Joiada, or Judas, was high priest at the death or removal of the able and aged governor. He appears to have been intrusted with the administration of affairs. He sustained this office forty years. But we have no information respecting his actions or times. He was succeeded by his son Jonathan, or John, as he is called by Josephus. Prior to his elevation to this high office, Artaxerxes Mnemon had ascended the throne of Persia. Bagoses was, under him, governor of Syria; and it happened that this officer had contracted an intimate friendship with Jeshua, the brother of the high priest. This circumstance might be expected to have produced a favorable effect on Jewish affairs; and, under the influence of ordinary principle and integrity, it would have done so. But, on the contrary, this apparently auspicious circumstance led to one of those atrocious acts which afterward frequently disgraced the history and the religion of the Jews.

In consequence of this friendship, Bagoses had promised to procure the high-priesthood for Jeshua, who, returning to Jerusalem, informed his brother that he expected soon to supersede him in the pontifical dignity: their interview was in the court of the temple, where the dispute arose to such a height, that the high priest "in his anger slew his brother."—*Josephus, Ant.*, b. xi, ch. vii, sect. 1.

Enraged at hearing of the death of his friend, Bagoses proceeded

* Ezra, although of the priesthood, when governor, appears to have acted in a lay capacity, and not as a priest, such as the high priests who succeeded to power on the death of Nehemiah.

immediately to Jerusalem, and insisted upon entering into the temple, that he might ascertain the facts of the case. And when the Jews objected, on the ground of his defiling the holy place, he asked, with anger, whether they "thought him more impure than the dead body which lay there;" and, without further parley, forcibly entered the sanctuary. Having fully satisfied himself of the facts, he imposed penalties in the form of tribute on the Jews, and especially a heavy tax on the sacrifices offered in the temple.

On the accession of Ochus to the Persian throne, this tax was remitted. But in his reign the Jews appear to have suffered severely. Western Asia having been grievously oppressed by the Persian lieutenants, and Egypt having shaken off the yoke, the Phenicians revolted; in which they appear to have been joined, or at least supported, by the Jews. To restore his affairs to order in these provinces, Ochus assembled a great army, and marched into Phenicia, where he destroyed Sidon. He then besieged and took Jericho, making many of the Jews captives. Some of these he sent into Hyrcania, and located them on the borders of the Caspian Sea, whilst he took others with him into Egypt. (Josephus contra Apion, lib. i.) In the reign of this sovereign Johanan died, and was succeeded in the high priesthood by his son Jaddua. Ochus was soon after poisoned by his minister Bagoas, who first raised Arses to the throne, then cut him off, and bestowed the regal dignity upon Darius Codomanus, who was happy enough to destroy the infamous Bagoas, and seat himself firmly upon the imperial throne.

The various changes which had taken place in the Persian government, and, still more, the rising military power of Greece, had for some time clearly indicated the approaching fulfillment of Daniel's prediction of the subversion of the kingdom of Persia.

During the high priesthood of Jaddua, this memorable event took place. Alexander of Macedon invaded Asia, and in a short time completely subdued the immense territory over which the Medo-Persian sceptre had been wielded from the days of Cyrus the Great. It does not belong to this volume to detail the operations of the war, any further than it affected the Hebrews. That daring soldier, having vanquished the Persian lieutenants at the river Granicus, and inflicted a terrible defeat on Darius himself at Issus, found himself in possession of all Asia Minor, and at liberty to carry out his design of making himself master of all the fortresses on the coast, between Cilicia and Egypt. In pursuance of this object, he laid siege to Tyre; and, aware that the city, wholly devoted to commercial pursuits, derived its principal supplies of grain from the Jews,

he sent to Jerusalem to demand provisions for his army. To this demand Jaddua replied, that he had sworn allegiance to Darius, and that he would not violate his oath, nor act in contravention thereto, while Darius was living. Alexander, although greatly enraged, did not allow himself to be diverted from his purpose, but submitted to the inconvenience until he had taken and destroyed Tyre. He then determined to invest Gaza; and in his way proceeded to Jerusalem, to chastise the Jews for what he regarded as their temerity and insolence, in refusing to supply his army with provisions when before Tyre.

When the purpose of the mighty Macedonian became known at Jerusalem, the high priest and the people were greatly alarmed. They had the more reason for apprehension, because the Samaritans had waited upon Alexander at Tyre; and, acknowledging him as their lord, and renouncing Darius, had obtained privileges from him in answer to their application. Jaddua therefore commanded the people to offer special sacrifices and prayers to God for help in this emergency; after which he was directed in a dream to adorn the city, open the gates, and himself and his priests, dressed in their pontifical garments, with the people clothed in white, to go out to meet the Macedonians. Obedient to the vision, he acted accordingly; and, while Alexander approached the city, the venerable band of priests, followed by the citizens, attired in this unusual manner, met them; upon which, instead of reproaching them for their behavior, and inflicting the punishment of slaughter and plunder which his followers expected, he saluted the high priest with profound veneration, to the amazement of those who followed him. His intimate friend Parmenio alone ventured to ask the king the reason of this strange behavior; when Alexander answered, "I did not adore *him*, but THAT GOD who hath honored him with his high priesthood; for I saw this very person in a dream, in this very habit, when I was at Dios in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that he would conduct my army, and would give me the dominion over the Persians; whence it is, that, having seen no other in that habit, and now seeing this person in it, and remembering that vision, and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under the Divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind."—*Josephus, Ant.*, b. xi, ch. viii, sect. 11. Having said this, the king again turned to Jaddua, and saluted him, and, placing him at his right hand, entered into the city in a friendly manner, and offered sacrifices to God in the temple. The high

priest then showed him the prophecies of Daniel, where it was stated that a Grecian king should overthrow the Persian empire, so that Alexander left the sanctuary with the greater assurance of entire success. Upon leaving the city, the Macedonian monarch called the principal Jews together, and inquired whether they had any request to make: they then petitioned to be allowed to live under their own civil and religious laws, and to be exempted from taxation every seventh year, when their land was not tilled. The king, having granted these petitions, departed from Jerusalem.

He had not proceeded far from the city, when he was met by a large body of Samaritans, who, having complied with his wishes at Tyre, and assisted him with eight thousand men when the Jews refused, thought they had much stronger claims on his kindness. They therefore requested that he would also honor their city and temple by going to Samaria. To this request he replied, that he was obliged to hasten to Egypt, and must defer this visit until his return. The Samaritans then petitioned to be exempted from tribute the seventh year; upon which he asked them if they were Jews, since to them only had he granted this privilege. They said, they were Hebrews, but had the name of Sidonians, living at Shechem. He asked them again, whether they were Jews; and when they said they were not, "It was to Jews," said he, "that I granted that privilege: however, when I return, and am thoroughly informed by you of this matter, I will do what I shall think proper."—*Josephus, Ant.*, b. xi, ch. viii, sect. 6. (See *Appendix*, note 106.)

During the government of this high priest Alexander prosecuted and completed his meteor-like career. Under his brief rule in Asia, the Jews appear to have enjoyed tranquillity and prosperity. Two years after the death of Alexander, Jaddua died, and was succeeded in the high priesthood and government by his son Onias. With the death of the Macedonian hero, the peace and prosperity of Judea also expired. The situation of this country, bordering upon Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, and in the way to the eastern part of Asia, was sure to involve it in the wars and political convulsions to which those kingdoms were soon to be subjected. Nothing but miracles could save Judea and the people from prostration and tyranny. But it was the land of miracles. Every part of the soil had witnessed the mighty interpositions of God on behalf of his people. Every hill-top had seen the arm of the Lord made bare in support and defense of Israel. But fidelity to God was necessary to secure this Divine support: this was not now found in Israel. Judea, therefore, sank down under the weight of calamity, incident to its situation and circumstances.

At the first partition of the empire among the generals and friends of Alexander, Cœlo-Syria, Phenicia, and Judea were assigned to Laomedon, and afterward confirmed to him by a second covenant. But Ptolemy Lagus, the natural brother of Alexander, who had obtained Egypt, soon stripped him of Syria and Phenicia: the Jews, however, having sworn allegiance to Laomedon, refused to submit; whereupon Ptolemy invested Jerusalem; and taking advantage of the Sabbath-day, when the Jews, from religious principle, refused even to defend themselves, took it. Although, by this means, he obtained his object without loss, it did not prevent him from treating the Jews with great severity, carrying away nearly a hundred thousand of them as captives into Egypt. But reflecting soon after on their known loyalty to their former conquerors, the sacred regard they paid to their oaths, and being, by the reduction of Jerusalem, master of Judea and Samaria, he committed the keeping of several considerable garrisons, both here and in Egypt, to them; and, having made them swear allegiance to him, he gave them the same privileges as they had enjoyed under the Macedonian empire.

The incessant warfare which raged among the successors of Alexander, prevented the continuance of circumstances so favorable to the prosperity of the Hebrew people. Antigonus, king of Syria, having greatly increased his military power, prepared to invade Palestine with a mighty army. Ptolemy, not being able to resist this force, dismantled several cities; and, taking with him an immense booty, and great numbers of the people, he retired into Egypt, leaving Judea in the hands of the Syrian king, who ruled the Hebrews with great severity. This evil, in its influence upon the condition and prospects of the Jewish state, was greatly aggravated by the conduct of Seleucus, who at this time reigned over the eastern provinces. Having extended his government over Asia Minor, where he built several cities, this prince treated the Jews with much kindness and liberality, and conferred many important privileges upon them; in consequence of which, great numbers of the Hebrews avoided the tyranny of Antigonus, by emigrating to the countries governed by Seleucus; and thus, while obtaining a comfortable location for themselves, weakened the parent state in proportion to their wealth, property, and intelligence.

But Judea did not long remain under the government of Syria; for, ten years after Antigonus had wrested it from Ptolemy, he was himself defeated and slain, at Ipsus, by the united armies of Seleucus and Lysimachus; immediately after which, the Jewish territory quietly reverted to the sway of the king of Egypt. This was secured

to him by treaty, B. C. 301, when the empire was finally partitioned between Seleucus, Ptolemy, Cassander, and Lysimachus.

The year following, Onias, the high priest, died, having held that office and the government twenty-one years. He was succeeded by his son Simon, surnamed the Just. This pontiff repaired and fortified the city and the temple, and made a large cistern for supplying the city with water. His praise is thus recorded in the Book of Ecclesiasticus: "Simon the high priest, the son of Onias, who in his life repaired the house again, and in his days fortified the temple: and by him was built from the foundation the double height, the high fortress of the wall about the temple: in his days the cistern to receive water, being in compass as the sea, was covered with plates of brass: he took care of the temple that it should not fall, and fortified the city against besieging. How was he honored in the midst of the people, in his coming out of the sanctuary! He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full: as the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds," &c. Chap. 1, 1-7. After having thus contributed to the stability and prosperity of his people, Simon died; and, his son Onias being too young to take the office, he was succeeded in the high priesthood by his brother, Eleazar. (Josephus, *Antiq.*, b. xii, ch. ii, sect. 5.) There was, however, another dignity, which had been held by all the priests who had preceded him from the time of the restoration, to which Eleazar was not advanced. This was the presidency of the great synagogue; an office which was now conferred upon Antigonus of Soccho, a person celebrated in Jewish history as the founder of the sect of the Sadducees. It was during the rule of Eleazar that Ptolemy Philadelphus, who had succeeded to the throne of Egypt, caused the Hebrew Scriptures to be translated into Greek; thus giving to the world the Septuagint version of those sacred books. Although the particular discussion of these subjects does not belong to this place, yet these facts demand the observation, that great numbers of the Jews were now found, not only in Egypt, but in almost every part of Asia. The clement conduct of the Ptolemies, and the generosity of Seleucus, by which the Jews were permitted to enjoy the freedom of those cities which he built, tended greatly to distribute the surplus population of Palestine. These advantages made it rather more desirable for Jews to reside in Egypt or Asia Minor, than in Judea, unless they remained there under very favorable circumstances.

Eleazar died B. C. 276, having held the government fifteen years. At his death, although Onias was now thirty years of age, he was not elevated to the priesthood; but Manasses, the son of Jaddua,

succeeded to the pontifical dignity. During his government, notwithstanding the almost continual wars which were carried on by the neighboring countries, Judea enjoyed tolerable quiet, and made further progress in population and wealth. During the whole of this period the general mode of government appears to have been, for the high priest, as chief ruler of the state, to pay an annual sum to the paramount sovereign, as a kind of tribute, or, more properly, as a composition for the taxes. This amount being settled, the Jews lived according to their own laws, and, under the rule of the Egyptian princes, scarcely felt the dependence of their position. But this arrangement, although for a while it seemed to work well, afterwards produced great crime and suffering.

After the death of Manasses, Onias, the son of Simon the Just, became high priest. His elevation to the dignity, which appeared as his birthright, had been long delayed; but events showed that, even then, he had obtained power too soon for the interests of his country. He was in character just the reverse of his noble and virtuous father. At this time the amount annually expected by the king of Egypt was twenty talents of silver. This sum had been regularly paid by the predecessors of Onias; but, as he increased in years, his sordid mind coveted the money; he therefore discontinued the payment for a long time, until a large amount of arrears had accumulated; and the king of Egypt became so importunate for the payment, that he threatened, if it were not immediately made, he would confiscate the whole country, drive out the Jews, and colonize the province with his own soldiers. This terrible threat, unexpected, as it was undeserved on the part of the people, filled them with consternation. But, amid the general apprehension, the guilty old man was alone unmoved, and resolved to risk everything rather than refund the money.

In this emergency, the danger was averted by the talents and address of a nephew of the high priest, named Joseph. This young man, having obtained his uncle's consent to travel into Egypt, and endeavor to satisfy the king, (although he was obliged to borrow money of a Samaritan to defray the expenses of his journey,) proceeded to the Egyptian court. In traveling by caravan to Egypt, he found himself in company with several rich persons, who were going to Alexandria to obtain the farming of the revenues of Phenicia and the neighboring provinces. Having succeeded in eliciting a considerable mass of information from them respecting the value of the revenues of the several provinces, he determined, if possible, to turn this to good account. When, therefore, he presented himself to the king, and was favorably received, he offered double the sum

previously paid for the taxes of Phenicia, Coelo-Syria, Samaria, and Judea; and the king was so pleased with him, that he accepted his offer, dispensing, in his case, with the usual rule, requiring bondmen for the payment of the amount.

Just at this time Ptolemy Philopater succeeded his father Euergetes on the throne of Egypt; and, a few years after, Simon II. followed his father Onias II. in the high priesthood and government of Judea. He was a man of great piety and zeal, and equally distinguished for ability and courage; and this was just the period when one of his character was required. Under the government of his father, the administration of affairs had been greatly neglected. The Samaritans, who were at this time in a prosperous state, made frequent incursions into Judea, and carried off booty and slaves. (Josephus's *Antiq.*, b. xii, ch. iv, sect. 1.) But greater dangers soon threatened the state. Theodore, governor of Phenicia, revolted from the king of Egypt, and engaged to put his own province, together with those of Judea and Coelo-Syria, into the hands of Antiochus, afterward surnamed the Great. This plot having been discovered, Antiochus marched into Galilee, and took several cities on both sides of Jordan. But Ptolemy proceeded to defend his territory, defeated Antiochus in a great battle, and compelled him to abandon his object, and retire from Palestine. The Jews being forward to congratulate him on his success, he received them kindly, and told them that he purposed going to Jerusalem to sacrifice: he did so; but, having made many splendid presents to the sanctuary, he at length expressed a wish to see its interior. Simon strongly dissuaded him from his purpose, on account of its unlawfulness, even to Hebrews. But this only served to inflame the curiosity of the king. He therefore forced his way through the outer courts, and was about to enter into the holy place, when, either by miraculous interposition, or by greatly excited superstitious fear, he was "shaken like a wind, and fell speechless to the ground,"* and was carried forth half dead. On recovering, he left the city, uttering the most dreadful threats against the whole nation of Jews. It is not known to what extent these were carried into effect.

The death of Philopater, leaving his son Epiphanes a child, gave Antiochus an advantage which he was not slow to improve. He accordingly invaded Palestine with a powerful army; and, after a long and desperate struggle, in which he was ably opposed by the Egyptian general Scophas, he succeeded in annexing Judea to his dominions. Contrary to their usual practice, the Jews on this occasion aided the invader. Probably the pollution of their temple

* *Maccabees* ii, 21, quoted in Hales's *Analysis*, vol. ii, p. 542.

by the king of Egypt, and the persecution which followed his disappointment, was the cause of this.

Antiochus fully appreciated this conduct of the Jews; and, as they had greatly suffered during the war, he wrote to his generals, commanding them to pay the Jews a large pension for the support of the sacrifices of the temple; to afford assistance toward finishing some works still in progress in the sanctuary; to grant all the Jews perfect liberty to live according to their own civil and religious laws; to allow the whole province an exemption from taxation for three years, that they might repair the losses sustained in the war; and, remitting a third part of all their taxes in future. Antiochus also published another edict throughout his kingdom, in which he specially prohibits any foreigner to come within the limits of the temple, or to bring anything into the city of Jerusalem in violation of the Jewish law.

As the conduct of the Jews in this instance appeared so productive of national advantage, it is not surprising that Josephus should approve the course taken by his countrymen; yet this behavior appears to be denounced by Daniel as the conduct of robbers. Dan. xi, 14.

Soon after this, Simon II. died, and left his son Onias, third of that name, as his successor. He, too, was a good man, and disposed to govern with moderation, and to preside over the religious institutions of the country with piety and zeal; but the times in which he lived demanded more than ordinary ability. During the early part of his rule, Antiochus, who had manifested uniform kindness to the Jews, was murdered, and succeeded in the government of Syria by his son Seleucus. He, too, for awhile greatly favored the Jews, and furnished out of his own treasury the costs of the sacrifices for the temple. 2 Macc. iii, 3. At this time the land enjoyed profound peace and great prosperity; while the piety and zeal of the high priest carefully watched over the best interests of the people.

But all this happiness was soon after destroyed by that great bane of Jewish prosperity, intestine strife. It happened at this time that one Simon, a Benjamite, held a very important office under the title of "governor of the temple." He, we are told, quarreled with Onias "about disorder in the city." 2 Macc. iii, 4. What was the occasion of this disorder, or why it caused a rupture between these great men, we are not informed; but the effects of the quarrel were ruinous. For Simon, not being able to overcome the high priest, who was greatly beloved and respected, determined to sacrifice his country to his anger. He therefore fled to Apollonius,

who was then governor of Palestine under the Syrian monarch, and told him that there were immense treasures deposited in the temple at Jerusalem, which might at any time be taken for the king's use. The governor immediately forwarded this information to Seleucus; and, his exchequer being in a very needy condition, he immediately sent Heliodorus to bring these treasures to Antioch.

This officer, anxious to obtain his object with the least possible disturbance of order, pretended that he was ordered to inspect the several cities of Coelo-Syria and Phenicia. With this ostensible object he came to Jerusalem, where he was received with great honor. Here he acquainted Onias with the orders he had received from the king, and inquired very particularly after those treasures. The high priest told him that there were treasures in that sacred place, but that they consisted of goods consecrated to the service of God, of money laid up for the relief of widows and fatherless children, beside a considerable sum deposited there for security by Hircanus the son of Tobias, a man of great dignity. Moreover, the priest added that, as guardian of this holy sanctuary, and holding this wealth in trust, he would never consent to its being taken from its rightful owners. This remonstrance, however, not being sufficient to release Heliodorus from the positive orders which he had received, he persisted in enforcing admission into the temple, for the purpose of abstracting the treasure. The high priest, without resorting to the use of arms, did his utmost to obstruct his passage. When the case became known, the whole city was moved, and the most intense feeling displayed. In the midst of this confusion, Heliodorus ordered the gates of the temple to be broken down; and when his men had so far succeeded in this work as to open a way to the sacred place, and the officer was just forcing a passage, then, while the priests were in an agony of prayer, and the people in a state bordering on distraction, God interposed: it is said an apparition appeared to the Syrians; but, from whatever cause, Heliodorus fell senseless to the ground, and was obliged to be carried away by his attendants. The Jews rejoiced in this wonderful deliverance; but, concerned lest any evil should happen to Heliodorus, Onias offered sacrifices and prayers on his behalf; and, when he recovered, he returned to Antioch, without having accomplished the object of his mission.

When Simon found that he had failed in this attempt, he proceeded to excite the people against the high priest, until a tumult was raised, in which several persons were killed. Onias, dreading the effects of these disorders, and finding that his rival Simon was high in favor with Apollonius the governor, went in person to com-

plain to Seleucus at Antioch. This had the desired effect : he was graciously received, and Simon was banished.

It is necessary to observe here, that as the time was drawing nigh when the Jewish people would cease to be the Lord's covenant nation, and the recognized depositary of truth and righteousness in the world, we see Divine Providence, by a singular and frequently dissimilar chain of agencies, bringing into operation two great elements, calculated to effect the most important alterations in the aspect and condition of the world. We have, first, the silent progress of a giant power, which was destined to subdue all the rival nations of the earth, (see *Appendix*, note 107,) and to bring all the known world under one paramount and imperial dominion ; while, on the other hand, an equally remarkable concurrence of circumstances was, to say the least, alleviating the curse of Babel, and affording all nations a common vehicle of communication, by which, from Judea as a centre, the knowledge of sacred history, and of the great truths of Divine revelation, might be circulated far and wide. (See *Appendix*, note 108.) These important facts will soon be found affecting the character and relations of the Jews.

Soon after the journey of Onias to Antioch, by which means he got rid of his factious rival Simon, king Seleucus died, and was succeeded by Antiochus Epiphanes ; who was mean in his spirit, low in his habits, covetous in disposition, and exceedingly cruel in temper.

The evil tendency of his bad character was, however, rather elicited by the corrupt state of Jewish morals, than voluntarily directed against this people. But the result was terrible beyond description. Soon after his accession, Jason,* the brother of the high priest, proceeded to the king at Antioch, and offered a great increase of tribute, if he would appoint him high priest, and confine his deposed brother Onias in his capital. The necessities of the king, occasioned by the great tribute which he had to pay to Rome, acting upon an unprincipled and covetous mind, induced him to yield a ready compliance with this infamous proposal. The pious and venerable Onias therefore was forthwith deposed and banished, and Jason invested with the high priesthood.

Finding how availing money was with the young monarch, Jason gave a further sum for liberty to erect a gymnasium at Jerusalem, for the celebration of Grecian games in the holy city ; and to build an academy for teaching youth the sciences, after the manner of

* It is said that the proper name of this wicked man was Joshua, or Jesus ; but that, anxious to propitiate the king, and divest himself as far as possible of Jewish peculiarity, he gave his name the Greek form of Jason.—*Universal History*, vol. iii, p. 48, note.

Greece; and for power to make such Jews as he thought fit free of the city of Antioch. The effect of these licenses tended to strengthen the party of the usurper, and at the same time to inflict a terrible blow on the great cause of Jewish nationality and religion. The academies were erected, and Grecian learning cultivated. His gymnasium was so much frequented, that priests neglected their duties at the altar to contend in the games. As these exercises were performed naked, it induced a general desire to avoid the distinguishing mark of Judaism. "The only avowed purpose of these athletic exercises was the strengthening of the body; but the real design went to the gradual changing of Judaism for Heathenism, as was clearly indicated by the pains which many took to efface the mark of circumcision. The games, besides, were closely connected with idolatry; for they were generally celebrated in honor of some Pagan god. The innovations of Jason were therefore extremely odious to the more pious part of the nation, and even his own adherents did not enter fully into all his views."—*Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth*, vol. i, p. 308.

So extensively did this impious priest carry out his irreligious and denationalizing plans, that he actually sent Jews to contend in the games which were celebrated at Tyre before Antiochus, although they were avowedly in honor of Hercules; transmitting by them, at the same time, a large sum to be presented as a votive offering to the god. The persons intrusted with the present had, however, so much more sound principle than their master, that they presented the money to the Tyrians for building ships of war.

About this time Antiochus, aware that the king of Egypt intended to attempt the recovery of Judca and Phenicia, in making a tour of these provinces, went to Jerusalem, where he was received by Jason with great splendor.

This apostate high priest had now labored for three years to destroy the Jewish constitution and religion, when he found himself the victim of villany similar to that which he had himself practised. It being the time to remit the annual tribute to Antioch, he sent it by the hand of his younger brother Onias, who, carrying out in his own case the prevailing desire to merge all Hebrew distinctions in an accommodation to Greek customs and manners, had taken the name of Menelaus. This person, in his intercourse with the Syrian king, instead of discussing those subjects with which he had been charged by his brother, availed himself of every opportunity of insinuating himself into the good graces of the king; and having to some extent succeeded, he ventured to bid a much larger sum than Jason had paid as tribute, and was accordingly invested with the

high priesthood. Thus did the unworthy descendants of Israel barter away the interests of their country ; and, instead of uniting their energies to make Judea strong and respectable in the eyes of surrounding states, they looked at nothing but the gratification of their own low and sordid passions.

Menelaus returned to Jerusalem with his commission, where, as he was supported by the powerful sons of Tobias, he soon found himself at the head of a formidable party. But, notwithstanding this, Jason had sufficient strength to resist his pretensions ; and the people being disgusted with his infamous treachery, he was obliged to return to Antioch. Here, the further to commend himself to the favor of the king, he and his friends solemnly abjured the Jewish religion, and engaged to bring the whole Hebrew people to take the same course, and to assimilate their manners and institutions in all respects to the model of the Greeks. On making these promises, he obtained a military force, which being unable to resist, Jason fled to the country of the Ammonites, leaving to the still more apostate Menelaus the government of Jerusalem. He proceeded to carry out his engagement with the imperial court in all but one particular,—he neglected to send the tribute which he had promised to pay. After having been repeatedly reminded of his obligation in vain, he was summoned to Antioch, where he soon found that the amount must at once be paid ; but the temporary absence of the king at the moment of his arrival gave him time to send orders back to Lysimachus, his deputy at Jerusalem, to abstract as many of the golden vessels from the temple as would suffice to raise the money. By these means he realized enough to pay his debt, and, besides, to make large presents to Andronicus, to whom Antiochus had intrusted the direction of affairs in his absence. But this fact coming to the knowledge of Onias, the deposed high priest, who resided in exile at Antioch, he complained so severely of this conduct, that an insurrection of the Jews residing in the capital was seriously apprehended ; in consequence of their anger against Menelaus. At his instance, therefore, Andronicus murdered the pious ex-high priest under circumstances of the greatest baseness and atrocity. This sacrilegious conduct was equally fruitful of mischief at Jerusalem ; for although Lysimachus had three thousand men under his command, so enraged were the populace when they heard what had been done, that they attacked him and his guards, and, having slain many, pursued him into the temple, where he was destroyed.

On the return of Antiochus to Antioch, he was informed of the death of Onias by the hand of Andronicus ; and, wicked as he was, he was so affected at the enormity of this crime, that he ordered that

officer to be taken to the spot where he had committed the murder, and there to suffer the penalty of death. 2 Macc. iv.

These collisions and murders had brought Jerusalem into great trouble and difficulty, and rendered the rule of Menelaus hateful to the people. While the Jewish capital was in this distracted condition, Antiochus visited Tyre. The Jewish sanhedrim (See *Appendix*, note 109) took advantage of the proximity of the king to Jerusalem to send three persons thither, for the purpose of explaining the unhappy circumstances of the Jewish people, and of showing that this was attributable to the conduct of the high priest. They acquitted themselves so well in this duty, that Menelaus, unable to defend himself, had recourse to his usual weapon, bribery: by this means he gained over the king's favorite, Ptolemy Macron, who not only induced the monarch to acquit the high priest, but also to put the deputies to death.

This afforded Menelaus a complete victory; so he henceforth proceeded on in his career of impiety and cruelty, unchecked by inward principle or external power. During this time, while Antiochus was engaged in an expedition to Egypt, on a report being spread that he was killed before Alexandria, Jason, who had been long sheltered among the Ammonites, suddenly appeared before Jerusalem with a band of one thousand resolute men. With this force, by the aid of his friends within the city, he easily obtained admission, and forced Menelaus to retire into the citadel. Being thus in possession of the metropolis, he vented his rage against all those whom he suspected to belong to the party of his brother: this led to the most shocking barbarity, which, however, was soon terminated by the approach of Antiochus. The king, having invaded Egypt with every prospect of success, was suddenly arrested in his progress by the presence of Roman ambassadors, who insisted on his immediate retreat, on pain of being declared an enemy to Rome. Not daring to meet the arms of the republic, he sullenly relinquished his prey; and, returning, heard that the Jews had rejoiced at the rumor respecting his death, and were now in a state of insurrection against his authority: he therefore marched directly to Jerusalem. The Jews, aware of his wrath, closed their gates, and defended their city with great vigor; but in vain; they could not resist his army: Jerusalem was taken by storm,* and subjected to the most horrid barbarities. The carnage lasted for three days; and it is said forty thousand persons were killed, and an equal number taken for

* Josephus, in his "Antiquities," appears to intimate that the Jews did not, on this occasion, resist; but in his "Wars," he says, that Antiochus took the city, which is confirmed, 2 Macc. v, 12; Diodorus Siculus, 34, "Book of Fragments," p. 726.

captives, and sold as slaves into the neighboring countries. Elated with his success, he caused Menelaus the high priest to lead him into the temple, even into the most holy place. Here he defiled the sacred vessels, and removed all the gold, valuables, and treasure which had been laid up there, even to the veil of the sanctuary. By these means he obtained one thousand eight hundred talents of gold and silver, besides the gold and vessels which he took from the temple; and with this booty he marched in triumph to Antioch. 2 Macc. v, 21. And as if this butchery and robbery was not a sufficient infliction on the unhappy Jews, he confirmed Menelaus in the high priesthood, and appointed one Philip, a Phrygian, a most barbarous man, to be governor of the country.

These measures were the commencement of a regular system of tyranny and slaughter. After two years from the spoiling of the temple by Antiochus, he sent Apollonius to Jerusalem, with an army of twenty-two thousand men. He came in a peaceable way, and took up his quarters in the city, until the first Sabbath-day, when he sallied out with his troops, ordering them to massacre the men, and make captives of all the women and children. This cruel and unexpected attack on an unarmed population, amid the sanctities of the Sabbath, filled Jerusalem with blood, and was followed by universal rapine; the houses were plundered and demolished, the walls of the city broken down, and a castle built on Mount Zion, which commanded the entrance of the temple; by which means Apollonius obtained entire control over the celebration of worship.

These preparations appear to have been made with the design of carrying out a preconceived purpose of the king. Soon afterward an edict was published at Antioch, and proclaimed in all the provinces of Syria, commanding the people, throughout the whole empire, to worship the gods of the king, and to acknowledge no religion but his. An old Greek was sent to Judea to enforce this law. Henceforth all the services of the temple were prohibited; circumcision, the keeping of the Sabbath, and every observance of the law, were now made capital offenses; all the copies of the sacred books that could be found were destroyed. Idolatrous altars were erected in every city, and the people were commanded to offer sacrifices to the gods, and to eat swine's flesh every month on the birth-day of the king. The temple at Jerusalem was altered and profaned, in accordance with this infamous policy. The sacred building was dedicated to Jupiter Olympius; an image of this Heathen deity set up; and, on the altar of Jehovah, another smaller one was erected, on which to sacrifice to Jupiter. 1 Macc. i, 41-64; 2 Macc. v.

The Jews had never before been subjected to a persecution so

directly leveled against all their institutions, and enforced with such diligent and persevering malignity. The execution of these laws was as execrable as their object. Two women, having circumcised their infants with their own hands, being detected, were led through the streets of Jerusalem, with their infants hung about their necks, and then cast from the highest part of the walls of the city, and dashed to pieces. On another occasion a thousand men, women, and children were discovered secretly observing the Sabbath in a cave, and all barbarously put to death by the inhuman Philip.

Antiochus was enraged to find that so many of the Jews resisted his will; and his wrath was perhaps rendered more intense, because the Samaritans had readily submitted to his edict, and allowed their temple to be dedicated to Jupiter *Xenios*, or, "the protector of strangers." He therefore came in person to Jerusalem, to enforce the law, or extirpate the people. His first victim was Eleazar, a very aged scribe, who, when commanded to eat swine's flesh, positively refused, and although ninety years of age, upheld the religion of his God with sterling energy; and, at last, exhorting others to follow his example, died under the lash of the tyrant. A mother and her seven sons, all grown up, acted in the same heroic manner. The young men, refusing to transgress the law, were subjected, in succession, to the most horrid tortures, until every one of them, and, lastly, the mother also, died martyrs for the cause of truth and righteousness. 2 Macc. vii.

These atrocities produced the results which always follow such deeds, where any manly spirit or nobility of soul remains. Men who had a conscientious regard for the law of their God and the religion of their fathers, and whose minds were not so debased by slavery as to have lost every noble attribute of human nature, would prefer dying in a patriotic resistance to such tyranny, rather than to perish tamely under the power of the tyrant. The man who first dared to adopt this course was an aged priest, name Mattathias, the father of five sons, all distinguished for bodily strength and nobility of mind. When the king's officers came to the city of Modin, where this family resided, to make the Jews sacrifice to the Heathen gods, they invited Mattathias to bring his sons and brethren first to the sacrifice, that the influence of his character and office, as a ruler, might induce others to follow his example; that he might thus be regarded as one of "the king's friends." The aged priest indignantly refused compliance, protesting that, if himself and his sons stood alone, they would adhere to the law and ordinances of God. While he was thus declaring his determination, he saw one of the apostate Jews come forth to the altar to offer sacrifice. This fla-

grant act roused the spirit of the priest: inflamed with zeal, he ran toward the culprit, and, in the sight of all the people, inflicted on him the punishment which the law denounced against idolatry,—he slew him upon the altar. He also killed the king's commissioner, who had been sent to compel the people to sacrifice, and pulled down the altar; then, running through the city, crying, with a loud voice, "Whosoever is zealous of the law, and maintaineth the covenant, let him follow me," (1 Macc. ii, 27,) he, with his sons, abandoned all the property they had in the city, and went out into the wilderness. They were quickly followed by many others; and, as soon as it was noised abroad, great numbers crowded to their retreat, until Mattathias found himself at the head of a considerable body of men.

Having placed himself and his friends in this position, the venerable priest addressed himself to the arduous duty which he had undertaken with becoming gravity and zeal. The first point which appears to have engaged his attention was, the proper line of conduct which they were bound to pursue with respect to the Sabbath. Hitherto the Jews had always regarded themselves as under a religious obligation to avoid all warlike operations on that holy day. To such an extent had this been carried, that they would not defend themselves, even when attacked. Their Heathen foes, therefore, generally selected the sacred day for their assaults, that they might secure their object without resistance. But Mattathias, having considered the subject with his friends, and consulted such learned scribes as he had access to, decided that, although it was not right to provoke a combat on the Sabbath-day, it was, nevertheless, their duty, if attacked on that day, to defend themselves, and resist the aggression. 1 Macc. ii, 41. This was a most important decision, and had a mighty influence upon the results of the ensuing war.

The general course of proceeding adopted by the aged chief seems, also, to merit particular attention. He did not shrink from engaging any of the Syrian forces that came in his way; but his principal object, or, at least, his immediate design, does not appear to have been the expulsion of the Syrians. As a patriotic soldier, this might have been expected; but as a patriotic priest, he thought it wiser to act differently. He appears to have viewed the humbled and prostrate condition of Israel as the result of the infidelity of the people; and therefore directed his energies to the restoration of the Jewish faith. With this object he marched from town to town, destroying all idolatrous altars, punishing with death, or driving into other lands, those that had apostatized from the faith, recovering the sacred books which had been concealed, and restoring again the law, the worship, and the authority of Jehovah. In these efforts he was eminently successful.

Those who had not been circumcised submitted to that rite; and not only was the religious aspect of the country soon greatly improved, but some important advantages were gained over the enemy. When the venerable Mattathias found his end approaching, he exhorted his sons to devote their lives to the holy cause in which they had been engaged, reminding them of the noblest examples in Hebrew history. He then advised them to regard their brother Simon as their counselor, on account of his wisdom; and Judas he appointed the captain, because of his strength and bravery: him he surnamed *מַכְבִּיר* *Maccabeus*, or, "the hammerer."* Thus Mattathias blessed his sons, and died in a good old age.

On the death of his father, Judas took the command of the band which had been gathered together, about six thousand men, 2 Macc. viii, 1; and, as soon as the days of mourning had expired, proceeded to carry on the war. This may be called the war of Jewish independence. From the time of their return from captivity, the Jews had been always in entire subjection to Gentile powers. At first they were a part of the Persian empire; they then passed under the dominion of Alexander; on the division of his kingdom they were subjected to Egypt; and, lastly, had been attached to the Greek kingdom of Syria. Nor is it probable that the Jews would have made any vigorous efforts to obtain freedom and self-government, if they had been ruled with tolerance and moderation. But the boundless cruelty and insane impiety of Antiochus were too much for endurance, by men of such energy and intellect as the Jews. Besides, the time was peculiarly appropriate for such an attempt. The disjointed fragments of the Macedo-Grecian empire were becoming daily more feeble and disorganized; while the mighty power of Rome was steadily advancing, giving constant evidence of her great purpose and destiny,—to govern the world. It was, therefore, the manifest policy of Rome to encourage, rather than to suppress, efforts made by states, subject to the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, for the purpose of obtaining independence.

Under such circumstances Judas commenced his martial career. We are desirous of giving a clear exhibition of the prominent events of Jewish history, and particularly of this period; but we have no partiality for extended details of bloodshed and slaughter: our account of these military efforts will therefore be as condensed as may be consistent with perspicuity.

The first efforts of Judas were directed to the recovery of the strongholds and fortresses which constituted the important military

* A similar appellation was given to Charles of France, who was surnamed *Martel*, or, "the hammer."

positions of the country. By a series of actions, planned with great boldness, and executed with equal daring, he obtained possession of the most important of these, and made his name terrible to Syrians, Samaritans, and apostate Jews. At the same time, those Hebrews who had fled into exile, rather than conform to the Grecian idolatry, gradually returned and ranged themselves under his standard. It was fortunate for the cause of Jewish freedom, that while Judas was pursuing this career of success, and securing to himself a basis for future and more decisive achievements, Antiochus was wasting his time and squandering his resources in a series of foolish, but very costly, games and entertainments at Antioch. At length Apollonius, the Syrian governor of Judea and Samaria, perceiving that the course of Judas could no longer be concealed or endured, gathered an army, and proceeded to attack him. Judas, not at all daunted by the superior numbers of the enemy, did not avoid the combat. The result was a total defeat of the Syrian army, which left Apollonius, their general, and a great number of his men, dead on the field. Judas, in this encounter, took the spoil of the enemy, and particularly the sword of Apollonius, which he used ever afterwards.

This defeat greatly enraged Antiochus; and he again vowed the total extermination of the Jewish race. But his exchequer was empty, and he was obliged to wait until he could obtain the means of bringing a sufficient force into the field.

While the wicked king of Syria was preparing to take the war into his own hands, Seron, the deputy-governor of Cœlo-Syria, marched against Judas, hoping to crush this rebellion before the king had completed his arrangements. With this object he marched to Beth-horon, where Judas, with a small body of men, met him. These were so wearied with their march, and so terrified at the number of the Syrian army, that they desired to avoid the conflict. But, Judas assuring them that the battle did not depend upon the number of warriors, but upon the blessing of God, they took courage; and, their captain bravely leading them on, the Syrian host was completely routed, and Seron was killed.

This new success induced Philip, the governor of Jerusalem, to assure Antiochus that Judea would be lost to the Syrian kingdom, unless speedily relieved by an efficient army. At this news, the rage and embarrassment of the king were greatly increased. He found that, while large and vigorous efforts were immediately indispensable in Judea, his resources were nearly exhausted. Rousing himself, therefore, from his luxury and sloth, he took a part of his forces and marched into Persia, hoping thus to accumulate sufficient treasure to supply his wants, leaving Lysias in charge of the government at home,

with orders to invade Judea, and destroy all the Jews. This officer delayed not to carry the wishes of his sovereign into effect. He accordingly dispatched Ptolemy Macron, governor of Coelo-Syria and Phenicia, with Nicanor and Gorgias, two experienced officers, and forty thousand men, with strict orders to see the king's commands punctually obeyed. These proceeded to Emmaus, where they were reinforced by seven thousand horse.

Judas immediately marched his little army to meet them; and, having encouraged his men by recapitulating their past exploits, he proclaimed, according to the Mosaic law, that all who had married wives, planted vineyards, or felt their hearts fail, should have leave to depart. This license reduced the numbers of his men to three thousand; and even these few intrepid men were but imperfectly armed. He then marched his little band to Mizpeh, to seek Divine aid by prayer, fasting, and sacrifice; and then proceeded to the vicinity of the opposing army, telling his men that he should attack them the next morning. In the evening, however, he was informed by his scouts, that Gorgias was coming that night, with five thousand foot, and one thousand horse, hoping to surprise and cut him off. He deemed this a favorable opportunity to make a bold attack on the main body of the enemy. He therefore marched his troops, and fell suddenly on the Syrian army, which, weakened by the absence of the detachment under Gorgias, and thrown into confusion by the suddenness of the attack, was completely routed, with the loss of three thousand men, and all their camp, baggage, and spoil. Meantime Gorgias, who had in vain sought the Jewish army among the mountains, returned with his men, weary and dispirited, and, on coming to his camp, found it fired, and the main body of the army dispersed. This threw his troop into such a panic, that, in defiance of all his efforts, they threw down their arms, and fled. In the pursuit, Judas killed six thousand more of the enemy, and completely supplied his wants by the spoil of the Syrian camp; for here he not only obtained arms and furniture, but he found that so certainly was success presumed by the Syrian army, that many merchants accompanied it, prepared with large sums of money to buy the Jewish captives. These, also, with their treasure, fell into his hands, and abundantly provided him with means to carry on the war.

In another respect the result of this victory was even more advantageous to the Jewish chief. His countrymen now found that his cause was not so desperate as they had imagined. They therefore rallied around him in increasing numbers, and he soon found himself at the head of a respectable force.

When intelligence of this defeat reached Antioch, Lysias collected

an army of sixty thousand foot, and five thousand horse, and, placing himself at its head, marched to Judea through Idumea. But, while investing Bethsura, a frontier fortress, Judas, with ten thousand men, attacked him, and routed his army, killing five thousand of his men. This victory threw the whole country open to the Maccabean chief, and so terrified the Syrian soldiers, that Lysias was compelled to seek troops in distant countries for a new expedition.

Judas now returned to Jerusalem, where he repaired and purified the temple. The sacrifices were recommenced on the same day on which, three years before, the temple had been dedicated to Jupiter Olympius. The new dedication was celebrated for eight days with great joy and gratitude. The stronghold, which had been built upon Mount Zion, still continued in possession of the Syrians and apostate Jews. These were always ready to sally out, and destroy any who might be seen attending the services of the sanctuary. Nor had Judas sufficient time to concentrate his army, and reduce this fortress; nor could he afford to detach a force strong enough effectually to blockade it. He therefore built a high wall, to protect the temple from this danger.

Judas now turned his attention to those neighboring tribes which had made aggressions upon Judea during the time of trouble and subjection. He first marched against the Idumeans, who had taken possession of the southern parts of Judea. These he subdued, and burned their towers. 2 Macc. x, 15-23. His next object was the chastisement of the Ammonites, who had occupied the country about Jazer, on the east of the Jordan, where, in a series of battles, he defeated them. Verses 24-38. Gilead, Galilee, and Bozrah were in succession the scene of his exploits. Wherever Jews were confined or oppressed, or an organized opposition was preparing, this unwearied chief was seen, alike active, prudent, and valiant. In many cases he found small numbers of Jews persecuted by the Heathen, and for whom, in their isolated position, he could afford no permanent defense. These he removed into Judea, with their wives and children, thus saving them from much future danger, and concentrating the strength of the nation. Antiochus was informed of these successes of the Jews while in Persia; and, agonized with vexation, he set out on his return, but died on the journey. 1 Macc. vi, 1-16; 2 Macc. ix.

At the commencement of the following reign, the Jews were treated kindly by Ptolemy Macro; but he soon afterwards committed suicide: when Lysias, the regent of the kingdom, again invaded Judea, and laid siege to Bethsura a second time, and was again defeated with great loss by Judas. Soon after this victory, Judas was

enabled to terminate this war with Syria. The Roman ambassadors then in Antioch appear to have aided in obtaining this peace. 2 Macc. xi, 34–38.

The Syrian garrison on Mount Zion still continued its harassing annoyance; and Judas, freed from external aggression, now determined to reduce it; but intelligence of his measures having reached Antioch, Judea was again invaded by Lysias, with an army of one hundred thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, and elephants and chariots. To this host no open opposition could be offered; but, while they were besieging Bethsura, Judas, in a night attack, cut off four thousand men, and retired in safety before day-break. On the next day a battle was fought; but Judas, to save his little band from being surrounded, was obliged to retreat to Jerusalem, the fortifications of which he had strengthened. In this conflict he lost his youngest brother. 1 Macc. vi, 19–51.

These desperate efforts appeared fruitless: Bethsura fell into the hands of the enemy, Jerusalem was closely invested, and all the advantage which had been earned at the cost of so much danger and blood seemed about to be lost forever; when Providence interfered. Lysias heard that Philip, who had been appointed regent by the late king, had entered Syria at the head of an army levied in Media and Persia. He therefore made peace with Judas, acceding to all his demands. Yet, on being admitted into Jerusalem after the treaty, he immediately violated it by breaking down the walls of the city: he then retired to Antioch. One favorable result of this event was, the removal of Menelaus, who, being now in disfavor, was taken away with the Syrian army, and soon after put to death. Alcimus was appointed high priest in his stead.

But this person not being in the regular succession to the high priesthood, and withal an unprincipled and wicked man, the Jews refused to allow him to enter upon the office. He accordingly returned with his adherents to Antioch, and complained of the affront thus offered to the monarch, and the injury inflicted on himself. Accordingly, Demetrius, who had escaped from Rome, and was now on the throne, sent an army under Bacchides into Judea, to establish Alcimus in his office by force. This general entered the country as if on a peaceful mission, until, having got some Jews in his power, he treacherously put them to death. But, being unable to decoy Judas, he left a force sufficient to protect Alcimus, and retired to Antioch. Judas, who had retreated before the superior forces of Bacchides, on hearing of his departure, immediately appeared, and, marching through the land at the head of his troop, inflicted summary punishment on those Jews who had apostatized

from the faith. Alcimus, unable to make any effectual resistance, again repaired to Antioch, and renewed his complaints. Demetrius now sent another army under Nicanor, who had special orders either to kill Judas, or to take him prisoner.

This officer, like his predecessors, endeavored, by a show of friendship, to get Judas into his power; but in vain. War was therefore renewed. In the first battle the Syrians were defeated, and Nicanor obliged to take refuge in the fortress on Mount Zion. In a second conflict, fought soon after, he lost his life, and his army was entirely destroyed or dispersed. After this victory, the Jews enjoyed a season of quiet, which Judas improved by sending an embassy to Rome, to solicit the friendship of that great nation. The ambassadors were favorably received, and an alliance entered into, which, although it precluded the imperial power from no right, was calculated to benefit the Jews. At the same time the senate sent orders to Demetrius, forbidding him in future to encroach upon Judea. (Justin, xxxvi, 3; 2 Macc. iv, 11; 1 Macc. viii.)

Before the return of these ambassadors, or the communication from the senate of Rome could reach Demetrius, he had sent another army, under Bacchides, into Judea. Having in his way secured the famous cave of Maseloth in Galilee, he appeared before Jerusalem, with twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse. Judas, emboldened by continual success, ventured to attack this army with his own, which at the first was but three thousand; and of these the far greater number, shrinking from the unequal conflict, deserted before the battle. With those few followers the intrepid chief assailed the right wing of the Syrian army, broke it, and pursued it to a considerable distance; but as he had no reserve to keep the left wing of the enemy in check, it moved round, and completely inclosed the Jewish band. On this occasion Judas was slain, after having performed prodigies of valor.

If ever praise was deserved by any soldier-patriot, it was earned by this noble-minded Jew. His sphere of action did not place nations at his feet, or give him an opportunity of marshaling myriads; yet, making a proper estimate of his small resources and his great achievements, the Hebrew hero, during the six years of his martial career, will not be disparaged, when placed in comparison with any warrior whose deeds have been heralded by history, or formed the theme of poetic inspiration.

After the death of Judas, the apostate Jews, under the protection of the Syrians, again recovered strength, and were placed by the Syrian general in possession of all offices of trust throughout the country; while, at the same time, no mercy was shown by Bac-

chides to any one who was known to have been a follower of Judas.

In this crisis those who still adhered to the worship of Jehovah, and were willing to hazard their lives in his cause, gathered themselves together, and made Jonathan, the youngest brother of Judas, their captain. Under his command they withdrew to the wilderness. "After a few skirmishes with the Arab tribes in that neighborhood, Jonathan sent the wives and children of his soldiers to the Næbathæans, under a convoy, commanded by his eldest brother Johanan, or John, Caddis, (*Kaddîç* יְהִי.) But while on their way, they were attacked and plundered, and John himself was slain by the Arabic tribe of Jambri from Medaba."—*Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth*, vol. i, p. 338.

This was a serious loss, but it did not dispirit the Maccabean chief. He retired to the marshes of Jordan; and being furiously assailed by Bacchides with a greatly superior force, after a brave defense, the captain and his gallant band plunged into the river, swam to the other side, and escaped.

The Syrian general then returned to Jerusalem, repaired the fortifications of the castle on Mount Zion, and strengthened several fortresses throughout the country, providing them with arms and provisions, that the garrisons of these posts might always hold Judea in subjection.

Alcimus was now confirmed in the high priesthood; nor was it likely that his tenure of the office would be soon disturbed. But he was in a position which brought him in a very special manner under the eye of Jehovah: he dared in these circumstances to transgress yet more fearfully, and he died. He commanded (in all probability, in compliment to his Syrian friends) that the wall, separating the court of the Gentiles from the court of the Israelites, should be thrown down; but as he was commanding this, he was smitten with palsy, so that he could not speak, and died in great agony. Bacchides, in consequence, retired to Antioch, and the Jews had two years of tranquillity.

Jonathan and his friends did their utmost during this interval to strengthen their cause, and increase their numbers; until they had become so formidable, that the apostate Jews sent to inform Demetrius, king of Syria, of their growing strength, and to invite him to cut them off. Bacchides was accordingly sent again into Judea with his army; but Jonathan, having discovered the design of the apostate Jews to seize his person, and deliver him up to the Syrian general, had fifty of the principal conspirators put to death. This prevented the others from attempting anything. The forces of

Jonathan did not enable him to meet Bacchides in the field. He therefore retired to Bethbasi, a fortified place in the wilderness, which he repaired, and put into such a posture of defense, that the utmost efforts of the Syrians could not reduce it. Bacchides, enraged at his failure, raised the siege, and in his wrath put to death many of those Jews who had invited him to undertake this disastrous campaign. On his retiring from Bethbasi, Jonathan sent an embassy after him, with proposals of peace, which were accepted, and sworn to by both parties.

The affairs of Syria now afforded some prospect of good for the Jewish people. Demetrius Soter having made himself obnoxious to the surrounding states, and given himself up to luxury, a young man of obscure birth was put forward, who pretended to be the son of Antiochus Epiphanes, and as such laid claim to the Syrian throne. Having, by means of this external support, raised an army and made himself formidable, under the title of Alexander Balas, Demetrius was roused from his sloth. In those circumstances, the rival parties saw the importance of winning over the Jews. Demetrius therefore sent to Jonathan, offering to make him governor of Judea, and ordering all the hostages detained in the citadel of Jerusalem to be released, giving him, at the same time, full power to levy troops. By using this letter, Jonathan obtained the release of the hostages, and the retirement from Judea of all the Syrian garrisons, except that of Bethsura, and the citadel of Zion, which were still held for the Syrians; but which were occupied chiefly by apostate Jews.

Alexander Balas was not behind his rival in his offers. He called Jonathan his friend and brother, sent him a golden crown, and a purple robe; and appointed him to the high priesthood. Jonathan accepted these presents, and entered upon his office as high priest; he did not, however, openly commit himself to either party.

Demetrius, upon hearing of this, became still more extravagant in his offers; and in an epistle which has been preserved by Josephus, (Ant., b. xiii, ch. xi, sect. 3,) he endeavored to outdo Balas in the extravagance of his promises. All this was vain: the Jews could not forget what they had suffered, and ultimately gave their hearty support to Balas, who, having defeated and slain his rival, ascended the throne. The affairs of Syria, however, were at this time too uncertain and troubled to allow an occupant of the throne repose: a short time sufficed to dispossess Balas, and place Demetrius Nicator, son of the preceding king, at the head of the government.

While these changes were taking place in Syria, Jonathan again invested the citadel of Zion. Notice of this being sent to Nicator, he summoned Jonathan to meet him at Ptolemais. The Jewish

chief obeyed the mandate; and not only succeeded in justifying his conduct, but so pleased the Syrian king, that he placed under the government of Jonathan several districts which had previously belonged to Samaria. Jonathan, having returned to Jerusalem, pressed the siege of the citadel; but finding it impregnable, he petitioned Demetrius that the garrison might be withdrawn. The king happened to be at this time in great distress: the citizens of Antioch having raised an insurrection against him, he solicited aid from the Jewish chief. Jonathan complied, and sent three thousand chosen men, who restored the city to obedience; when the faithless king, freed from danger, not only refused to withdraw the garrison, but insisted upon the payment of the tribute which he had previously remitted. By this conduct he completely alienated the Jews from his cause; nor did much time elapse before an opportunity offered for manifesting this alienation.

Trypho, who had administered the affairs of Syria under Alexander Balas, managed to obtain the custody of a son of his, who had been consigned to the care of an Arab chief. With this powerful element of rebellion, he soon collected an army, and appeared against Demetrius. So readily was his cause espoused, that Demetrius was defeated, and compelled to retire into Seleucia. The young prince then assumed the government, under the profane title of Antiochus *Theos*, "the God."

As Jonathan had great cause to be dissatisfied with Demetrius, he joined Antiochus, who, in return, confirmed him in possession of all his dignities and privileges. In consequence of this arrangement, Jonathan fought several battles with the soldiers of Demetrius, with varying success. At this time, however, he sent another embassy to Rome, which was kindly received, and dismissed with marks of friendship. The two brothers, Jonathan and Simon, exerted themselves, in this season of comparative tranquillity, to put the fortresses of the country in the best condition, and to prepare for any future circumstances. Nor was it long before dark reverses crossed their way.

Trypho had used Antiochus only as a means to work out his own personal and ambitious views. But he now found the way so opened, that Jonathan the Jewish high priest was the only apparent obstacle to his views. He accordingly devised a plan for getting this hero into his power, and, under pretense of adding Ptolemais to his dominions, Jonathan was induced to go there with only one thousand men. But immediately on their entering the gates, his men were cut in pieces, and he thrown into chains.

This was a terrible stroke to the rising cause of Jewish liberty.

But Simon, the remaining brother, broke its force by taking on himself the command of the army and the direction of affairs; so that, when Trypho, immediately on the capture of Jonathan, marched into Judea, he was met by Simon with such an imposing force, that the Syrian general durst not hazard a battle. Trypho then pretended that his object in seizing Jonathan was to obtain the payment of one hundred talents, due for tribute; and that if this sum was sent him, and Jonathan's two sons as hostages, the chief should be released.

Although Simon distrusted these statements, he sent the money and the young men. The perfidious Syrian received the hundred talents, and retained both Jonathan and his sons in captivity; and being compelled to retire into Gilead, he there put the noble Jonathan to death.

Simon now formally assumed the command of the army and the high priesthood, and sent ambassadors to inform the senate of Rome of his accession, and of the fate of his brother. They were received with every demonstration of honor, and returned with a treaty between Rome and the Jewish priest.

During this time Demetrius had still maintained the war with Trypho; and Simon and the Jewish people, being greatly incensed against the murderer of Jonathan, thought the friendship of Demetrius preferable to intercourse with such a perfidious person. They accordingly sent a present of a golden crown to Demetrius, with overtures of peace.

This measure was the means of restoring the Jews to political independence. Demetrius at this moment so greatly needed the aid of the Jews in his war with Trypho, and was so pleased with their voluntary adhesion to him, that he accepted their present, consented to bury in oblivion all past differences, recognized Simon as high priest and prince of the Jews, and relinquished all future claims on the Jewish people; and these grants were published as a royal edict. Thus did Judea again take its place among the independent nations of the earth.

REMARKABLE EVENTS FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENCE.

<i>In the History of the Jews.</i>		<i>Sovereigns of the Nations to which the Jews were in subjection.</i>	
	B.C.	PERSIA.	B.C.
Joiada High Priest (40 years)	413		
— Murders his brother Jeshua in the Temple	405	Darius Nothus	423
Jewish Sacrifices taxed in consequence	—	— Ochus	358
Ochus remits the Taxes on Sacrifices	358		

	B.C.		B.C.
Ochus takes Jericho, and carries many Jews into the East and into Egypt	350		
Jaddua High Priest (20 years)	341	Arses.....	338
Alexander the Great visits Jerusalem, and is informed of the Prophecies of Daniel	333	Darius Codomannus....	335
— Grants great Privileges to the Jews.....	—	MACEDO-GRECIAN.	
Judea a Province of Syria	323	Alexander	331
Jerusalem taken by Ptolemy Lagus, and Judea subjected to Egypt.	322	SYRIA.	
Onias High Priest (21 years)	321	Laomedon	323
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CHAPTER XI.

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE TO THE TIME OF CHRIST.

THE CONDITION OF THE HEBREWS ON THEIR ATTAINING INDEPENDENCE—Simon, Prince and High Priest, exercises the Attributes of Sovereignty, and coins Money—Simon, with his two Sons, barbarously murdered by his Son-in-law—John Hyrcanus succeeds as Prince and High Priest—His Rupture with the Pharisees—Unites politically with the Sadducees—Aristobulus follows his Father in the Sovereignty and High Priesthood—Death of his Brother Antigonus—Alexander Janneus reigns—Prosecutes several Wars—Insurrection of the Pharisees—Civil War—The King triumphs—His Widow succeeds to Power—Is reconciled to the Pharisees—Hyrcanus reigns—Deposed by his Brother Aristobulus—Antipater supports Hyrcanus—Pompey takes Jerusalem by Assault, and restores Hyrcanus—Antipater governs in his Name—Judea divided into Districts with an Aristocratical Form of Government—Antipater relieves Julius Cæsar in Egypt—Antipater poisoned—Hyrcanus deposed, and Antigonus seated on the Throne by the Parthians—Herod appointed King of Judea by the Senate of Rome—Antigonus deposed and put to Death—Herod reigns—His Cruelty and Power.

THE Hebrews at this period of their history, although restored to nominal independence, were nevertheless but a feeble people; whether we regard their national wealth or military resources as elements of power. Their elevation to this position they owed more to the zeal and energy which their religion inspired, than to their numbers or strength. When the scenes and sufferings through which they had passed are considered, it is wonderful that they should ever have been able to attain to that elevation which history assigns to them. Yet it is very evident that much of their weakness arose from their divided and scattered condition. At this time, when Judea was again taking her place in the midst of the nations, an immense body of Hebrews dwelt in Egypt, weakening the land of their fathers, and the power of the Jewish state, in proportion to their numbers, wealth, and intelligence. It may be doubtful whether we should regard the Samaritans as a part of the Hebrew family. But if this be denied to the original of this people, it cannot be doubted, that many Jews from time to time located among them. We know that this was the fact with respect to some; and in the season of persecution, when apostasy was frequent, it is probable many others acted in a similar manner.

In one very important particular these three separated communities present a uniform aspect. They all professed to acknowledge the Divine vocation of Moses, and the authority of his laws. Throughout the future history of the Hebrew people they had frequent intercourse with their brethren in Egypt, (see *Appendix*, note 110,) and

were always coming into contact with the Samaritans, (see *Appendix*, note 111;) so that while the Hebrews of Judea are regarded as the representatives of the race, these other communities must be considered as branches of the same family, and thus connected in their prospects and destiny with the parent state. An event which occurred about this time in Egypt, while it shows the violent spirit by which the rival factions were actuated, proves at the same time the intense interest with which Jews and Samaritans in Egypt regarded their relation to their native land. (See *Appendix*, note 112.)

Simon, high priest and prince of Judea, having succeeded in obtaining the recognition of his country's independence, proceeded to acts of sovereignty, and coined money bearing his name, and dating from B. C. 143 as the year of Jewish independence. (See *Appendix*, note 113.) All contracts and public documents from this date, instead of recording the year of the reign of the king of Syria, as formerly, stated the year of Simon's government, beginning with B. C. 143. 1 Macc. xiii, 42. Determined to consolidate his power, and make his dominion real, the Jewish chief first turned his attention to the fortification of the most important military posts in the country. Bethsura, being a frontier town, was repaired and placed in an efficient state of defense. Joppa and Gaza [query, Gazara. See Prideaux's *Conn.*, vol. ii, p. 267] were then successively taken and occupied by Jews. The fort on Mount Zion was next subdued and occupied by Simon. 1 Macc. xiii, 43-53.*

We have to record, in the next instance, an act of the sanhedrim and people, which casts great light on the political and social condition of the Jews at this period. Simon had succeeded to the dangerous post of captain-general. In this capacity he conducted the war of independence to a satisfactory issue, and had been confirmed in his offices as prince and high priest by the king of Syria, who renounced in his favor the sovereignty of Judea. This would, in some circumstances, have been held to be a valid title to the government: it was not regarded in this aspect by the people of Judea. The sanhedrim and the people, believing themselves to have rights and interests involved in this question, acted accordingly.

In the language of modern times, a meeting of the several estates of the realm was held, to consider this important subject. "At Saramael, in the great congregation of the priests and people, and rulers of the nation, and elders of the country, were these things notified." 1 Macc. xiv, 28. It appears from this, that the great sanhedrim, with the priests, officers, and heads of the people, entered into

* Josephus says, the fort was demolished, and the hill cut down; but Maccabees is a better authority.

conference on this matter. This assembly fully recognized the claims of the Maccabean family to national gratitude, recited the great actions of Simon, and finally decreed that he should be the perpetual governor and priest. This grant necessarily secured the succession of these dignities to his lineal descendants. The reservation which is introduced is worthy of attention. Simon is appointed to be their "governor and high priest forever, until there should arise *a faithful prophet*." Verse 41. It seems scarcely possible to refer this language to any but the promised and expected Messiah. For him was reserved the civil and ecclesiastical dominion; but until his appearing Simon and his successors were decreed to hold the government. The privileges associated with these offices were explicitly enumerated. He was to have the charge of the temple, and of all the fortresses in the land; and to have the right to command, and every man was enjoined to obey him; all edicts and public acts were to be issued in his name; he alone was allowed to wear purple and gold, and to call together a public assembly of the people; and, finally, whosoever contravened or disobeyed his commands should be punished.

In this solemn and public manner did the Jews inaugurate their chief magistrate; and, having done so, they had an account of all these proceedings engraved on a table of brass, and fastened to a monument, which was erected for the purpose in the temple. Copies were also preserved in the sanctuary, that "Simon and his sons might have them." 1 Macc. xiv, 49. These circumstances exhibit the public character of the Jews at this period. It is thus shown that the series of efforts which led to the attainment of liberty, notwithstanding the skill and capacity of the Maccabean leaders, depended mainly upon the public spirit and enlightened patriotism of the Jewish people. Having by their united energies won their liberty, they do not now waste their strength in struggles for power: there is no anarchical project propounded; but, like men of sense and religion, they invest a man of honesty, capacity, and public spirit with the attributes of government. But this is done in a manner which clearly teaches him, that the power placed in his hands is not his by absolute right, but a sacred trust with which he is charged for the benefit of his country, and that he holds his office in subjection to Divine interposition.

At this time the kingdom of Syria was subjected to a rapid succession of changes. Demetrius had granted freedom to the Jews, but was soon after defeated and taken prisoner by the Parthians, who detained him in captivity. Trypho, taking this opportunity of throwing off all restraint, made himself very odious to the army and

people; and as Cleopatra had heard that her husband Demetrius had married another wife in Parthia, she offered her throne and hand to her husband's brother, Antiochus, if he would aid her in the war with Trypho. Antiochus accepted the offer; and, anxious to obtain every support, made very earnest overtures to Simon, who readily responded to the call, and sent to his assistance men, money, and military engines. But this struggle was short. Trypho was defeated, and soon after taken and put to death.

Antiochus, however, made a very ill return to Simon for his kindness; for, being delivered from his rival, he sent back the men, money, and machines which had been sent to assist him, and forthwith dispatched an officer to Jerusalem to demand possession of Gazara, Joppa, the castle on Mount Zion, and other fortified places, or, instead of them, five hundred talents, and five hundred talents more for damages which the Jews were alleged to have committed in different parts of the Syrian kingdom. Simon replied to these demands, that he was willing to give one hundred talents for Joppa and Gazara; but that he claimed the other places as the hereditary inheritance of his fathers, which had been wrongfully seized, but had now been restored to their legitimate owners. Having received this refusal, Antiochus immediately proceeded to enforce his claim. It happened, unfortunately for the Jewish people, that their last letters of friendly alliance from Rome were directed to Demetrius; Antiochus therefore did not regard them as binding on him.

The Syrian army on this occasion was commanded by Cendebeus, who appears to have acted with singular caution in the prosecution of the war. He occupied and fortified Cedron; and from thence made incursions into Judea. Simon, being now too old to conduct a campaign in person, intrusted John Hyrcanus and Judas, his sons, with the command of twenty thousand foot, and some cavalry. With these troops these young men defeated the Syrians, and soon expelled them from the Jewish territory. As Antiochus had not quite subdued all the adherents of Trypho, the Jews were for a while unmolested. Simon availed himself of this season of quiet to make a tour of the country, accompanied by his two sons, Judas and Mattathias. In the course of his journey, he came to Jericho, which was at this time under the government of Ptolemy, who was son-in-law to Simon, having married his daughter. This man, who had become rich in his government, readily invited his relations to a banquet; and, whilst there, had them all three treacherously murdered. It appears that the ambitious wretch had come to a private understanding with the king of Syria, that if he could cut off the family of Simon, he was to have the government of Judea. Hav-

ing thus far succeeded in his infernal purpose, by the murder of his noble and venerable father-in-law, and his two sons, he instantly dispatched a body of assassins to cut off John Hyrcanus, who was then at Gazara. But the intelligence of their object outstripped their speed; John was prepared for their approach, and had them all taken and executed.

If the survivor had been a man of less talent and energy, this base conspiracy might have been fatal to the Jewish commonwealth, which had so recently emerged from a state of dependence. But John, while possessed of indomitable courage, and flushed with the vigor of manhood, inherited all the wisdom of his aged father. He saw his danger, and the means of defense; and accordingly fled to Jerusalem, where he arrived at the same time as Ptolemy, who had hastened for the purpose of seizing the capital. They presented themselves at separate gates, and demanded admission. John was received, and the murderer excluded. This base man, having in vain attempted to bribe some influential Jews to enter into his plans, sent to Antiochus, urging him to invade Judea, promising to bring the whole country under his government. Antiochus assented, and marched an immense army into Judea. But Ptolemy, whether feeling that he was regarded with unmingled abhorrence by the Jewish people on account of his crimes, or influenced by other motives, retired to Philadelphia, and is heard of no more in history.

The Jews immediately appointed John Hyrcanus prince, and high priest, in the place of his father; and he entered upon the duties of his office by making the best possible preparations for repelling the threatened invasion. But when Antiochus appeared at the head of his army, the Jewish prince found his forces so inferior, that he was compelled to retire before the enemy, and take refuge in Jerusalem, which was at once besieged with vigor. Nor had John the means of making a very protracted defense. The Jewish cause was therefore reduced to great peril. We have not the means of knowing by what influences Antiochus was moved; whether by an apprehension lest his reducing Jerusalem to extremity might give umbrage to the Romans, or, what is more probable, by a desire to have as auxiliaries a chief and troops so brave; but, whatever the reason might have been, the king of Syria spared the Jewish state when just within his grasp.

During the progress of the siege, the feast of tabernacles occurred, when John sent to Antiochus, requesting an armistice, that the feast might be observed. Antiochus complied, and sent him a handsome present of animals for sacrifice. This kindness led to proposals of peace. The terms were indeed sufficiently humiliating to the Jews.

They had to pay tribute for Joppa, to demolish the fortifications of Jerusalem, and to rebuild the fort on Mount Zion, or pay five hundred talents in lieu thereof. Yet, in their circumstances, these appeared easy terms. Josephus informs us, that, to make the payment of three hundred talents, which was immediately required, John opened the sepulchre of David, and took thence a thousand talents. This appears to be a most improbable story; and so it is regarded by Prideaux. By whatever means obtained, John punctually discharged his obligations to Antiochus. He also accompanied him with a body of Jewish troops in a war with Parthia, where the united Syrian and Jewish forces obtained several victories. When the army of Antiochus went into winter quarters, John returned home. This was a happy circumstance for himself and the Jewish nation; for the camp of Antiochus was soon after surprised, his army defeated, and himself slain.

John Hyrcanus now endeavored to improve to the utmost this favorable turn in national prospects. He made himself master of Madaba and Samega, cities of Syria. He also subdued the Samaritans of Shechem, and destroyed their temple on Mount Gerizim, although this did not prevent them from continuing their worship on the Mount. He then subdued the Idumeans, and gave them their choice, either to be circumcised and conform to the law of Moses, or to leave that country. They chose the former; and henceforth were incorporated, and became one with the Jewish people. John, having sent two embassies to Rome with favorable results, next proceeded to invest Samaria, still occupied by the Greeks located there by Alexander, which he took, and destroyed. From this time he greatly increased in strength, and raised the Jewish state to the highest degree of honor and power which it ever attained after the captivity.

Notwithstanding his continued success, Hyrcanus terminated his career unhappily. At this time the Pharisees and Sadducees were not only rival religious sects, but antagonistic political parties. John had all his life been attached to the former, and had shown them many acts of favor. It happened, however, if we may credit the statement given by Josephus, that the aged priest, under a vain impulse, afforded an opportunity to one of the Pharisees to inflict on him an unmerited insult of the grossest character. This offense not having been adequately and promptly punished by the elders of the sect, John indulged the most violent antipathy to the whole party. The Sadducees were not backward in making overtures; and the result was, that John threw himself into the arms of that party. His defection roused the ire of that energetic and united sect, the Pharisees, who gave the reigning priest constant trouble to the day of his death.

This justly celebrated individual died soon afterwards, having held the supreme government thirty years. His name is particularly famous for the building of the castle or fortified residence named Baris. When Simon had expelled the Heathen garrison from Mount Zion, he built high walls around the temple, to protect it from intrusion, in case the Heathen should make themselves masters of the city. Within these walls, and on the same mount with the temple, he built a house for his own residence. On this site John Hyrcanus erected a castle, which continued to be the dwelling-place of the Asmonean princes. Here they held their court, and conducted the business of the government. It was this building, still further improved and fortified, which was named Antonia by Herod, and which is referred to in the New Testament under the term "castle." Acts xxi, 34.

When John Hyrcanus died, he bequeathed to his wife the government of the country. His conduct in this instance was unworthy of his high reputation for wisdom; for he left four or five sons, all arrived at man's estate. The result, as might have been expected, proved to be most disastrous to the family. His son Aristobulus claimed the vacant dignity, which, as his mother refused to relinquish it, he soon wrested from her grasp; and, not content with this, shut her up in prison, where the inhuman monster allowed her to starve to death. Aristobulus loved his next brother Antigonus, and treated him as an equal. His other brethren he imprisoned. Having thus secured the high priesthood and the government, he assumed a crown, and the title and state of a king. The troubled condition of the kingdom of Syria invited the Jewish sovereign to increase his dominions in that direction. He accordingly, accompanied by his brother, invaded Iturea, which he subdued; and offered the inhabitants the alternative, that appears to have been the rule in those days, either to submit to circumcision and conform to Judaism, or to leave the country. Like the Edomites, the Itureans submitted, and from that period merged into the Jewish nation. We may not, at this distance of time, be able to account for the introduction of this policy; but its effects are manifest. Its continuance certainly tended to break down the great line of distinction between Jews and Gentiles.

During the prosecution of the war, the king fell sick, and was compelled to return to Jerusalem, leaving the army to prosecute the war under the direction of his brother. Antigonus successfully executed his mission; and, on his return, went immediately to the temple with a numerous retinue in armor, to celebrate the feast of tabernacles, and to offer prayers for the king's recovery. This step was so misrepresented to Aristobulus, as to intimate some dangerous or rebellious project on the part of the prince. The king, thus persuaded,

sent a message to his brother, to visit him unarmed, at the same time appointing some trusty soldiers in the way, who were commanded to kill him if he came in armor. Instead of delivering this request, the messenger was suborned (it is said by the queen herself) to say that the king particularly wished to see him in his armor. Antigonus, thus betrayed, fell into the snare, and was cut off. The king survived him but a short time. Remorse for his conduct to his mother, and concern for his brother's death, aggravated the malady with which he was afflicted; and he died, having reigned but one year.

The reader will feel little pleasure in perusing the details of a reign like this, and of those which are to follow. The Jews were so fully alive to the infamous character of the government of Judea in the ensuing reigns, that they suppose the holy theocracy to have terminated with the death of John Hyrcanus. (Josephus, *Ant.*, b. xiii, ch. x, sect. 7, *note.*) We need not wonder that Josephus, having had to record the marvelous interpositions of God on behalf of Israel, should feel the delicacy and difficulty of his position, when he had to bring the narrative of public events down to his own time; for few nations could exhibit in their leading men more general wickedness, or more shocking crimes. It became necessary, therefore, for the historian to repudiate the moral conduct of the national government for the preceding two hundred years. The attentive reader of this history, who considers the subject under the guidance of sound principles, will easily conclude that the Divine interposition was not limited to any particular period, nor always regulated by the moral character or religious fidelity of the Jewish government. Jehovah had raised up this people for great and special purposes. They had been unfaithful and rebellious, and were, consequently, often severely punished. But this did not alter the purpose, or frustrate the great plan, of Jehovah. The time was now rapidly approaching when, the measure of their iniquities being complete, they were to be cast off from his covenant, and scattered in his wrath unto the ends of the earth; yet, until the expiration of the appointed period, the overruling providence of God upheld the Jewish state, and not only directed the position of that people toward the accomplishment of his purpose, but likewise disposed the circumstances of all nations marvelously to coalesce in the accomplishment of that great object.

When Aristobulus died, his wife immediately released his three brothers from prison; when Alexander Janneus, the eldest of them, ascended the throne. He had been educated in Galilee, and had no means of improving himself by his father's counsel or advice; for from his earliest infancy John Hyrcanus would never allow him to

come into his presence. He did not peaceably establish himself in this dignity; for his next brother immediately endeavored to wrest the sovereign power from his hand, but failed, and was put to death. Absalom, the younger, quietly retired to a private station.

In the troubled state in which Syria, Egypt, and other neighboring countries then were, it would have been difficult to preserve Judea from participating in the evils of war, even if the ruling power had earnestly desired to do so. Alexander, however, rather sought than shunned the din of arms. At first he was successful; but being invaded by Ptolemy Lathyrus, who had been driven by his mother from Egypt, and at this time reigned in Cyprus, he was defeated with much loss. The barbarous invader, to strike the greater terror into the routed Jews, is said to have killed the women and children, cut up their bodies, and cooked the flesh; pretending that it was eaten by his soldiers.

The aid which Cleopatra of Egypt sent to his relief, appears alone to have saved Alexander from utter ruin. Extricated from this difficulty, he again prosecuted various wars, sometimes reducing cities which had been either taken, or had revolted, during the time of his danger; at others, invading Coelo-Syria, and subduing Gaza. Having generally succeeded, he returned to Jerusalem. But here he had to combat the no less formidable foe,—intestine sedition. At the ensuing feast of tabernacles, while Alexander officiated at the altar as high priest, the Pharisees, who had never forgiven the family for the secession of their father John Hyrcanus from their sect, assailed him with opprobrious cries, and citrons were flung at him. He had, however, prepared for such an outbreak, by having provided himself with a strong body-guard of Pisidians and Cilicians: these being commanded to fall upon the disorderly assembly, six thousand were slain:—a vengeful punishment for such an offense: its unwise severity defeated its object.

Having placed the affairs of the state in apparent order, although the Pharisees were still fostering the most rancorous hatred and revenge, Alexander reduced the Arabs of Gilead, and made the Moabites tributary. He then carried his arms against Obodas, an Arabian emir, who succeeded in decoying the Jews into a defile, where they suffered a terrible defeat, in which the army was entirely destroyed, and even the king effected his escape with the greatest difficulty. On his return to Jerusalem, this calamity having rendered him, who was before regarded with hatred and fear, the object of contempt, from violent invectives the Pharisees proceeded to insurrection; but even this did not prevent the king from acting with his usual energy. He soon collected a body of troops, and

proceeded to reduce the malcontents. They were, however, too determined to submit, and too numerous to be put down by any forces which the king could command. A civil war was consequently maintained for six years; during which time fifty thousand of the rebel party were slain, besides an immense number on the part of the king. This suicidal contest was fatal to the interests of the nation. Not only did it waste the resources of the country, diminish the number of its most able defenders, and fill the land with sorrow and disorder; it rendered the country powerless in the estimation of surrounding states, and encouraged those which had been subdued in former wars to throw off their dependence upon Judea. We may mention one instance of this. During the progress of the war, the rebels solicited the aid of the Moabites, and of the Arabs of Gilead: nor had Alexander any means of preventing this considerable accession of strength to his enemies but by remitting the tribute, and relinquishing the sovereignty, of these provinces which he had conquered at the expense of so much blood and treasure.

Alexander was not always so successful in preventing his revolted subjects from obtaining foreign aid. Their application to Demetrius of Syria brought him into great danger. At the solicitation of the revolted Pharisees, he marched into Judea; here he was reinforced by a large number of rebellious Jews, until his army amounted to forty thousand foot, and three thousand horse. Alexander met him at Shechem, but was defeated. The slaughter on this occasion was very great, and the result decisive. That which made the loss so terrible to the Jewish king was, the entire destruction of the Pisidians and Cilicians, who constituted his body-guard. This troop of six or eight thousand, his chief ground of reliance in the most desperate emergencies, was here cut off to a man; and the king, no longer able to keep the field, took refuge in the mountains.

But as, throughout the checkered life of this sovereign, it seemed as if one alternation of extreme circumstances was only preliminary to the very opposite; so here the Jews in the victorious army—regarding the defeat of the king, and the complete rout of his soldiers, (placing as it did the whole country in the power of a foreigner,) as pregnant with great danger to their native land, or touched with a generous compassion for the reverses of a man who, whatever his faults in conducting the government, had always behaved as a brave soldier—were induced to follow him in adversity whom they had resisted when in power. They therefore went over to him to the number of six thousand. This defection, with the probability of its extending, induced Demetrius to abandon the cause of the Pharisaic faction, and to return at once to Damascus.

Alexander, on hearing of this, again took the field, and enjoyed a constant series of successes; yet, harassed with intestine war, the king thought this a favorable opportunity for making peace. Having in vain submitted the most liberal terms to the heads of opposing factions, he asked them to propound theirs. Alexander, indeed, appears at this time to have become so sensible of the ruinous consequences of this unnatural war, that he was willing to make peace on any conditions. His repeated offers were unsuccessful. The dogged obstinacy of the rebels rejected every overture; and even when the king went so far as to ask them what he should do to give peace to the country, their answer to him was, "that he must cut his own throat, and that he ought to think highly of them, if they thought his death a sufficient recompense for the blood he had shed, and the mischiefs he had brought upon the country."

This answer induced the king to prosecute the war with increased vigor, and to cut off all those enemies who had proved themselves to be so relentless. He therefore continued his efforts and his successes, until, in one great battle, he completely destroyed all their power, and terminated the war; for, the remnant of the routed army having taken refuge in the city of Bethome, he invested the place, reduced it, and thus all the remaining warlike rebels fell into his power. On this occasion, if we may credit Josephus,* he acted with a cruelty which may be termed diabolical. It is said that he brought eight hundred of the principal of these wretches to Jerusalem, and had them all crucified in one place, on the same day; and, as if this horrid torture was not a sufficient infliction, each man, as he hung in agony, saw his wife and children brought to the foot of his cross, and butchered before his eyes. Another element of cruelty which the Jewish antiquarian has recorded, almost transcends belief; for it is said, that, whilst the horrid tragedy was being carried into effect, the king had a banquet prepared for himself, his friends, and concubines, within sight of this blood and agony. That day sufficed to scatter all the remaining elements of the faction; nor did they ever rally so as to harass the king again during his life.

Although Alexander still continued his martial operations with unabated energy, it is said that he indulged in sensual pleasures with great excess. The consequence was, that his health gave way; and having reigned nearly twenty-seven years, he died before Ragaba, which he was then besieging, B. C. 77. Notwithstanding the king had succeeded in mastering the Pharisaic faction, he appears to have been fully assured that no government could conduct the na-

* It must be remembered that Josephus was a zealous Pharisee, and might have exaggerated their provocations and sufferings.

tional affairs prosperously in opposition to this powerful and energetic sect. Having found all his efforts to procure a reconciliation with this party fruitless, he thought it best for his wife, after his decease, to endeavor to effect it. He therefore instructed her how to act in the event of his death, advising her, in case it took place before the capture of the city, to keep it a secret until that event; then to march the army back to Jerusalem, and, calling together the elders of the Pharisees, to give them his body to be treated as they might see good, but at the same time declaring that she would place the government of the country under their direction, and in all public matters be guided by their advice. Having given these instructions, and bequeathed the government to his wife, he expired.

Alexandra was strictly guided by these directions; and on the reduction of Ragaba, she repaired to Jerusalem, and fully carried out her husband's plan. The Pharisees were so delighted at the prospect of a return to power, that they treated the character and corpse of the deceased king with respect, eulogized his deeds, and gave the body a magnificent funeral.

As far as the consolidation of the national power and the extension of territory are to be regarded, the administration of Alexander Janneus was eminently successful, with the single exception of the alienation of the Pharisaic sect. At the time of his death, the kingdom of Judea included Mount Carmel, all Idumea, and all the coast as far as Rhinoculura; towards the north it extended to Mount Tabor and Scythopolis; beyond the Jordan it comprehended Gaulonitis, and all the territory of Gadara; including the land of the Moabites toward the south, and extending as far as Pella toward the east. (Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth, vol. i, p. 389.)

Alexandra, having secured the favor of the Pharisees, began her reign under very favorable circumstances. Her first act was to appoint her eldest son Hyrcanus to the high priesthood. According to her promise, she re-established the authority of the traditions and opinions of the Pharisees, and invested this sect with paramount influence in the national councils. Nor were her new allies backward in availing themselves of their new-gotten power. The jails were thrown open; all the Pharisees who had been imprisoned during the long civil war were released; great numbers who had fled to foreign lands returned; and the lately degraded sect now ruled with absolute sway. All this might have been expected, and would have been patiently endured; but, not content with elevating their friends, they proceeded to persecute those who, in obedience to the late king, had taken part in the principal inflictions which the sect had endured. Some of those who were concerned in the crucifixion of the eight

hundred rebels were taken and put to death. These measures alarmed those who had been the most faithful adherents of the late king; and a number of them, with the young prince Aristobulus at their head, presented themselves before the queen, and requested permission to leave the country, or to retire to the frontier fortresses; a request which appears to have been conditionally granted, by the sovereign allowing them to repair to several fortified places specified.

Nothing further of public consequence occurred during this reign, until the last illness of the queen; when Aristobulus, who was a spirited prince, and fond of power, privately left Jerusalem, and, passing from place to place, induced the several governors of fortresses to espouse his claims to the throne, in preference to those of his elder brother, who was of a sluggish temperament, and supposed to be entirely in the hands of the Pharisees. This sect had made themselves so odious by their late conduct, that the overtures of Aristobulus were generally received with great readiness. His successful progress in this important business could not be concealed from the Pharisees, who, under the queen, conducted the affairs of government. Their elders, therefore, came to the bedside of the sovereign; and, acquainting her with the serious aspect of affairs, requested her advice and direction in this emergency. Alexandra declined interfering, on account of her weakness, leaving them to devise such measures as they thought fit. She soon afterward expired, having reigned nearly nine years.

The Pharisees immediately seated Hyrcanus upon the throne, and placed the wife and children of Aristobulus in the castle of Baris, where they were held as hostages. This, however, did not deter the young prince from pursuing with the utmost energy the course upon which he had entered. When the Pharisees found that Aristobulus was gaining strength daily, and had assumed the title and state of a king, they gathered an army, and proceeded to oppose his progress by force of arms. This was just what Aristobulus desired. He saw that he had nothing to fear from an open and immediate contest; but that the husbanding of their resources, and keeping the capital in a state of military efficiency, would have had a much more formidable influence upon his proceedings.

The opposing armies met near Jericho, when the greater portion of Hyrcanus's troops went over to Aristobulus in the battle which followed; and, this prince having obtained a complete victory, Hyrcanus retreated to Jerusalem, followed by his victorious rival; and as the former had no chance of retrieving his fortune, he submitted to necessity, and, consenting to retire into private life, gave up the sovereignty and the high priesthood to his younger brother, who was

now universally recognized as the king, under the title of Aristobulus II., three months after the death of his mother.

We have no accounts of the early part of his reign, which appears to have been undisturbed; although the Pharisaic faction, disappointed and depressed, still kept around Hyrcanus, and waited any opportunity of hanging their cause upon his name, and making another effort to regain their lost elevation.

An individual now appears in the history, whose family was henceforth to take the most prominent position in the affairs of the Jewish kingdom. This was Antipater, an Idumean, who had become a proselyte to the Jewish faith. He had been governor of his native land under Alexander Janneus, and retained the same high office under the queen Alexandra. He was a man of great capacity, quick perception, and unbounded ambition. Although it is very unlikely that he had any partiality for either the Pharisees or Sadducees, regarded as rival sects, yet he saw that while Hyrcanus had a claim to the throne by hereditary right, he was so sluggish in disposition, and so limited in capacity, as to offer the greatest advantage to an energetic and ambitious minister. He therefore decided upon supporting Hyrcanus; but the rapid success of Aristobulus threw his efforts for awhile into the shade, and afforded the young king a few years of apparent stability. At length the results of the quiet, but daring, efforts of the wily Idumean became visible. Having made the preliminary arrangements, he took Hyrcanus with him to Petra, and there presented him to Aretas, king of Arabia, who was at length persuaded to invade Judea for the purpose of seating Hyrcanus on the throne; he being to receive as a reward a restoration of those places which preceding sovereigns of Judea had wrested from his dominions. When, in pursuance of this arrangement, Aretas marched his army into Judea, his object being well known, those who adhered to the cause of Hyrcanus, and the designs of the Pharisaic faction, joined his army and swelled its numbers. Aristobulus did not shrink from the contest; but in a great battle which ensued he was utterly defeated, and compelled to retreat to Jerusalem, where, unable to retain the city, he with his followers found refuge in the temple.

In this extremity Aristobulus, knowing that the Roman army under Pompey had subdued Tigranes, and had detached several generals into Syria, sent to Scaurus one of these, offering a large sum if he would come and deliver him from the Arabians. Although the Roman was waited upon about the same time by an embassy with similar offers from Hyrcanus, he received the present of Aristobulus, and sent a threatening message to Aretas, which induced

him at once to abandon his object, and retire from the country. Aristobulus, freed from the presence of this powerful foe, emerged from his retreat, collected his friends, rallied his troops, and pursued the dispirited Arabian army, which he defeated with great loss. Among the slain in this conflict was the brother of Antipater, who fell in the army of Aretas.

Aristobulus, although in possession of the country, was well aware that his tenure of royal dignity would be very short, unless he could induce Pompey to recognize his title to the throne. He therefore sent a most magnificent present to the Roman general: it was a golden vine upon a square mount, with deer, lions, and other beasts about it, and ripe fruit on the branches. All these were of gold, and were valued at five hundred talents. The presentation of this gift, and the advocacy of the king's cause, were intrusted to a learned Jew named Nicodemus. Hyrcanus was ably represented by the talented and indefatigable Antipater, who urged the claims of the hereditary prince to the Jewish throne. Pompey, having heard the case, dismissed the parties, with a promise that, after mature consideration, he would do them justice.

The following year, when the mighty Roman returned to Damascus, he summoned the two princes before him in person. Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, with witnesses and friends, accordingly attended. At this time, a deputation of Jewish elders appeared in opposition to both claimants. This circumstance is singular and important, and deserves to be very seriously considered. These persons alleged that a mode of government had been introduced, contrary to the ancient institutions of the nation; that they had formerly been governed by their high priests, but that the introduction of kingly state had exercised a pernicious influence upon the welfare and liberty of the people. After these had been heard, Hyrcanus stated his case, alleging that his brother had not only unjustly deposed him, and wrongfully assumed the government, but had also continually made incursions upon the neighboring provinces. The diligence of his friend Antipater enabled him to produce a thousand respectable Jews to depose to this fact. Aristobulus followed, alleging that the incapacity of Hyrcanus necessarily threw the government into his hands, to prevent its passing into another family; and that, in respect of title and state, he had only followed his father's.

Pompey declined delivering an immediate judgment, which, in fact, was a defeat to Aristobulus; and so it was regarded by the king. Throughout the whole business, and no less in the result of this negotiation, the crafty powers of Antipater are sufficiently evi-

dent. The wariness of Pompey rendered Aristobulus suspicious and vacillating: while professing the utmost submission to Rome, he neglected no means of resisting its decree, in case it should be against him. The short campaign which Pompey made to subdue Aretas gave the king of Judea time to commit himself fully. When, therefore, Pompey returned from Arabia, and heard of his warlike preparations, he sent for Aristobulus, and demanded possession of all the fortified places in Judea. To this demand he replied by flying to Jerusalem, followed by the Roman general. The king of the Jews, however, conscious of his inability to resist the Romans, went out to meet them, threw himself on the mercy of Pompey, and promised a large sum if he would spare the nation from the calamities of war. The Roman accepted the offer, detained Aristobulus, and sent an officer to receive the money. Instead of complying, the people shut their gates, and refused payment. This completed the rupture, and consummated the wishes of the ambitious Roman. Aristobulus was thrown into chains, Jerusalem invested, and the siege pressed with great vigor. At this time the Jews had again relapsed into the strange practice of refusing to do anything towards their defense on the Sabbath. Pompey, having observed this, carried on his most important operations on that day with perfect impunity. By these means, in the third month of the siege, a breach was made, and the temple stormed and taken. Twelve thousand Jews fell in the assault; the priests continuing their services at the altar, amid all the horrors of the scene, until they were cut down by the Roman soldiers, and their blood mingled with that of the sacrifices. The temple was thus taken in the summer of the year B. C. 63, on the very day observed with lamentation and fasting, in commemoration of the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

By these events the political position of Judea was completely changed: it had formerly rejoiced in the name of an ally of Rome; it was now a subordinate province of that immense empire. Pompey appointed Hyrcanus to the high priesthood, charging him with the government under the title of prince. He was forbidden to assume regal titles, or to extend his territories beyond the ancient limits of Judea. All the conquests which had been made were taken away, and connected with Syria; where Scaurus, the Roman general, at the head of two legions, exercised the functions of prefect. The subdued Jews had to experience yet greater degradation. Pompey, accompanied by his officers, walked through the temple, even into its most sacred place. He returned, however, without touching any of the sacred things, or abstracting any of its treasures, and ordered it to be cleansed, and the sacrifices resumed. Aristobulus,

with his two sons and two daughters, were carried to Rome, to grace the triumph of the conqueror. Having ordered the destruction of the fortifications of Jerusalem, the general retired through Pontus to Rome.

Freed from his danger, Hyrcanus soon relapsed into his native sloth, leaving the government almost entirely to Antipater, who, being crafty and ambitious, used it for his own purposes; and, as his interest lay in the favor of the Romans, he left no means untried to conciliate their good-will. Meanwhile, Alexander, the eldest son of Aristobulus, not being strictly confined or guarded at Rome, fled and returned to Judea, where he soon collected a body of ten thousand men, and secured possession of Alexandrion, and several other strong fortresses. Hyrcanus was in no condition to suppress this daring adventurer: he therefore commenced repairing the walls of Jerusalem, to protect himself from his power; but the Romans forbade their restoration. The Jewish prince then solicited the aid of the imperial troops, to put down this disturber of the public peace. The prefect of Syria detached the celebrated Marc Antony, then a young officer, on this service; whilst he prepared to follow. Antipater also sent a body of Jews to serve with the Romans. Alexander was by these means defeated, with a loss of three thousand men, and compelled to take refuge in Alexandrion. This fortress was besieged so straitly, that the young warrior, having no hope of escape, proposed terms of peace; which being seconded by the great address of his mother, who waited on the Roman general for the purpose, the fortresses were surrendered, and the defeated prince dismissed without punishment.

The result of this war was the division of Judea into five districts, each having an executive council; a form of government which continued until the time of Julius Cæsar. The year following, Aristobulus, with his younger son, escaped from Rome: he soon raised troops, and obtained some fortresses; but was in a short time subdued, and sent back to his former prison. In the succeeding year, while Gabinius was occupied in Egypt, Alexander again returned, and succeeded in raising a considerable body of men, and virtually made himself master of Judea, destroying all the Romans that came in his way. Unable to resist him in the field, the remnant of the imperial troops entrenched themselves on Mount Gerizim, where they were besieged by Alexander. When Gabinius returned with his army from Egypt, he first sent Antipater to the Jewish army with proposals of peace. The wily Idumean used his talents, not to obtain the submission of Alexander, but the defection of his troops. He succeeded to a great extent; but, notwithstanding the

reduction of his numbers, Alexander refused to submit: a battle was, in consequence, fought at Mount Tabor, where he was defeated, having ten thousand of his men killed on the field.

The political fate of Judea was subsequently involved in those rapid changes which took place in the government of imperial Rome. About this time Gabinius was recalled, and Crassus appointed in his stead. The charge against the former was, the sale of offices, extortion, and oppression: of these acts he was convicted, and banished. His successor began where he ceased. Coming to Jerusalem, one of his first acts was to pillage the temple, whence he took immense treasures. While these events were in progress, the prefect of Syria gratifying his sordid cupidity, Hyrcanus governing by means of Antipater, and the young Alexander manfully struggling to mount the throne of his father, the great conflict between Pompey and Cæsar was reaching its crisis. Having come to an open rupture at Rome, the former proceeded to the seat of his late government, to gather means of defeating his mighty rival. Cæsar, aware of his object, and knowing that Scipio was in Syria, laboring in the service of Pompey, released the captive Jewish king, Aristobulus, and sent him to Judea, that he might cause a diversion in his favor. The effort was vain; for, the purpose being known, this unfortunate prince was poisoned by the minions of Pompey on his journey. His son Alexander, however, adopted the policy intended for his father; but he was taken, and beheaded by Scipio. Soon after these events, the contest was terminated by the defeat and death of Pompey.

This result appeared unfortunate for Hyrcanus and Antipater, as they had so fully devoted themselves to the cause of the fallen triumvir. But the latter artful politician and daring soldier quickly extricated his cause from this difficulty. Antipater soon learned that, although Cæsar had conquered his rival, he had imprudently involved himself in the most desperate circumstances in Egypt; and that an army, raised in Cilicia and Syria, was hastening through Palestine to aid him. Antipater, with his usual sagacity, joined this army, with three thousand men, and induced many others to follow his example. Nor is it unlikely, from a consideration of all the circumstances, that the interposition of this Idumean Jew, with his band of Israelites, was the salvation of the future idol of Rome. It is more than probable that if Antipater had exerted the same zeal to harass and oppose the march of Mithridates, on his way to Egypt, we should never have heard of the famous *Veni, Vidi, Vici*, or have seen Rome bow to the fiat of one man. One or two facts may be cited in corroboration of this opinion. Antipater not only

took with him some amount of military power, directed by uncommon sagacity and daring; but he had, what was of much greater importance, letters from the high priest of Jerusalem to the Jews of Egypt, persuading them to aid the Roman cause. By means of these, this force was not only not opposed, but supplied with provisions and water in passing through the Heliopolitan Nomos, which gave the Romans possession of Memphis; and, when Mithridates, in attempting to penetrate into the Delta to relieve Cæsar, was met by an Egyptian force, and compelled to give way before them, the Jewish band under Antipater restored the fortune of the day, and brought the auxiliaries within reach of the great Roman.

Cæsar, being thus relieved, and having conquered Egypt, was careful to mark his sense of the services thus rendered by the Jews. He confirmed the privileges of all those who resided in that country, and commemorated their devotedness by a brazen pillar, which he erected at Alexandria. Nor was he less mindful of his friends in Judea. For when he arrived in Syria, being met by Antigonus, the younger son of Aristobulus, who claimed the government of Judea in the right of his father, Cæsar, having heard Antipater, altogether rejected the suit of the young prince, and condemned him as a seditious person: at the same time he confirmed Hyrcanus in the principality, and gave permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, which had been destroyed by Pompey. He also appointed Antipater procurator of Judea. Julius fully reported these things to the senate, who, by a formal decree, publicly acknowledged the Jews as the allies of Rome. This decree was engraven on plates of copper, and set up in the capitol; and also in the temples of Sidon, Tyre, and Askelon. Thus the aristocratical form of government appointed by Gabinius was entirely abrogated, and the Jewish principality restored.

Antipater carefully conformed to the views of Cæsar in arranging the affairs of Judea. He raised again the walls of Jerusalem, journeyed through the country, used every means to repress the lawlessness and disorder which the late troubles had engendered, and, by alternate persuasion and power, reduced the people to obedience. To carry out this plan, he made his eldest son, Phasael, governor of Jerusalem, and his second, Herod, governor of Galilee. The latter was a young man of extraordinary talent and spirit. He devoted himself with great ability to the difficult duty which devolved upon him. Galilee was at this time greatly infested with bands of robbers: Herod sought them out, and all that fell into his hands he put to death, even including Hezekiah, their leader. The reader is reminded, that the government of Antipater and his sons was not

popular with the Jewish people ; for all saw that, although Hyrcanus was the nominal head, restored by Pompey, the Idumean was really the chief. This was unpalatable : the people preferred Aristobulus. When, therefore, Herod was found acting in this decisive manner, he was summoned before the sanhedrim, to answer the charge of having arbitrarily exercised the power of life and death. The young man, under the advice of his father, appeared in their court, bearing with him a letter from the prefect of Syria, charging Hyrcanus, the president of the sanhedrim, to protect him. He presented himself, however, more like a prince than a criminal. He was attired in purple, with hair neatly dressed, and surrounded with his guards. This appearance confounded the Jewish elders. Even those who had preferred the charge against Herod did not now dare to repeat it, and he was thus virtually acquitted ; when Samoas arose, and, protesting at length against their cowardice, affirmed, that if they thus spared Herod, the time would come when he would not spare them.* This roused the assembly ; but Hyrcanus adjourned the business, and then advised Herod to withdraw ; and thus the case terminated.

About three years afterward, while Judea was progressing in order and wealth, Julius Cæsar was assassinated in the capitol, and the Roman world again convulsed, from its centre to its circumference.

Immediately after this event, Hyrcanus sent ambassadors to the Roman senate, requesting a confirmation of all the privileges and immunities which had been given by Cæsar ; a request which was immediately granted. While Rome and the provinces were in the utmost perplexity as to the result of pending arrangements, Antipater was most ungratefully poisoned by Malichus, a Jewish general, who soon after was put to death for the crime, at the instance of Herod, by Cassius Longinus, who then wielded the Roman power in Syria and Asia Minor. This circumstance, as Malichus was popular with many, increased the dislike of the Jews to Herod ; and they petitioned Marc Antony, who soon after came into Syria, against him ; but in vain : the address of Herod, in showing the services which his father had rendered to the Roman cause, warded off all danger, and secured him the protection of this triumvir.

Urgent necessity, however, called Antony into Italy ; and Syria and the neighboring kingdoms—having lately been subjected, in rapid succession, to the rapacity and extortion of Dolabella, Longinus, and Antony ; and knowing that Rome was at war with Parthia, and that

* This prediction was amply fulfilled. This young man was Herod, afterward the Great, who was king at the birth of Christ ; and Samoas is supposed to be the same with holy Simeon. (See Josephus, Jahn, &c.)

they were, in consequence, likely to be subjected to a repetition of these evils—agreed to invite the Parthians to come and occupy these countries. This was done. Syria and Asia Minor were occupied; and Antigonus, the surviving son of Aristobulus, was seated on the Jewish throne, with the title of king, under the protection of Parthia. In the course of these events, Hyrcanus and Phasael were made prisoners. The former had his ears cropped, and was thereby rendered incapable of ever being high priest again; the latter killed himself in prison. Herod contrived to escape; and, having placed his family and treasures in safety, fled to Rome.

When Herod reached the imperial city, he fortunately found Antony and Octavius there on friendly terms. He therefore renewed his friendship with the former, who received him very cordially, introduced him to Octavius, and stated how very useful Antipater had been to Julius Cæsar in Egypt. Herod was, therefore, patronized by both these great men, who held in their hands, at that moment, the political destinies of Rome and of the world. When the son of Antipater had fled as a fugitive to the imperial city, his highest hope was to get Aristobulus, a grandson of Hyrcanus, and brother to Mariamne, to whom he was espoused, placed upon the throne, with himself as minister, or procurator, under him. In this way his father had wielded all the power of Judea; and he hoped, at that time, for no higher dignity. But, being received with such marks of distinction, and promising Antony further sums of money, he was, by the favor of these two arbiters of the affairs of nations, himself raised to the throne. The senate was accordingly convened, and Herod introduced to the conscript fathers by two noble senators, who set forth the invaluable services rendered by his father to the Romans; and, at the same time, declared Antigonus, who then governed at Jerusalem, to be a turbulent person, and an enemy to their nation; while Antony pointed out the importance of having a fast friend to Rome on the throne of Judea during his approaching expedition against Parthia. The senate hereupon unanimously elected Herod to the throne, and voted Antigonus an enemy of Rome.

The whole of these proceedings were evidently conducted upon the presumption, that Judea was either a recognized province of the Roman empire, or, at least, entirely dependent upon the imperial state. But what follows is yet more strange. Considering the entire peculiarity of Jewish manners and religion, it might have been supposed, even if the senate had made the appointment, that the inauguration of the king would have been in accordance with the rites of the nation to be ruled. But, no! Immediately upon the vote of the fathers, Herod was conducted by Antony and Octavius into the capitol, and

there consecrated king, with idolatrous sacrifices. Having thus far secured the object of his highest ambition, Herod remembered that the affairs of his family and kingdom did not justify a protracted stay at Rome: he therefore departed from the city at the expiration of seven days; and, by a rapid journey, reached Judea just three months after he had left it.

Here, although beset with difficulties, he found a fair field: the Parthians had, during his journey, been driven from Syria, which was again occupied by Roman troops. His first care was to collect an army, with which, and some aid from the Roman general, he made himself master of Galilee. Following up this success, he marched to the relief of his family, who were closely besieged by Antigonus. In this object he also succeeded; and, after a series of dangers and exploits, he became master of all the country, and shut up Antigonus in Jerusalem. Yet, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of Herod, it was not until his rival had reigned three years that he was able, when supported by a Roman army, to reduce the capital, which was at length taken by assault, and subjected to fearful massacre and pillage from the Roman troops, who, enraged at the obstinacy of the defense, continued the slaughter after all resistance had ceased; and at length Herod had to pay a large sum of money to save Jerusalem from being destroyed. Antigonus was taken and put to death by the Romans as a malefactor.

Herod was now seated on the throne of Judea, the first of a new dynasty. Hitherto the Asmonean or Maccabean family had really or nominally governed. With Hyrcanus and Antigonus this line had ended; and Herod, who was not a Jew, but an Idumean by nation, and professedly a Jewish proselyte in religion, was, by the favor of Rome, invested with supreme authority over the Jewish people. From the first elevation of Antipater, the cause of his family was unpopular; and it was only the consummate sagacity of that person, in attaching himself to the oldest branch of the Asmonean family, which enabled him to carry out his purpose. Herod felt this throughout his career. It was this which kept Antigonus so long upon the throne; it was this which caused the son of Antipater so much difficulty, when possessed of the object of his ambition.

Fully aware of the state of the public mind, his first care, after having recovered Jerusalem, was the extermination of the Asmonean family. Although he had married Mariamne, the daughter of Hyrcanus, this seemed in no wise to soften the violence of his political hate. All those Jews who had supported Antigonus were proscribed, forty-five of the principal of them were slain; all their property was confiscated, and seized by the king; all the gold, silver, and valuables

found in Jerusalem were taken for his use; and thus, with the exception of a small part of the people, the land was treated like a conquered country. Influenced by this jealousy of the Asmoneans, Herod found an obscure priest of Babylon, who was descended from the ancient high priests of Israel. Him he raised to the high priesthood, although his wife's brother was of age, and heir to the office. He also cut off the whole sanhedrim, except Sameas and Pollio.

The superseding of Aristobulus in the high priesthood created an element of discord and misery in the family of Herod, which ultimately destroyed his peace. Herod's intimacy with Antony introduced his family to the infamous Cleopatra. Alexandra, the mother of Mariamne and Aristobulus, by her influence with this queen, and her intercession with Antony, induced Herod to cancel his appointment. Ananelus was set aside, and Aristobulus inducted into the high priesthood. But this young man was received with such marks of favor and affection by the people, while officiating at the ensuing feast of tabernacles, that all the jealous enmity of Herod was again blown into a flame, and the heartless king soon after caused the young priest to be drowned whilst bathing. Cleopatra, informed of this crime, used her utmost influence with Antony to have Herod slain. Besides the gratification of vanity and revenge, (for she had attempted in vain to seduce Herod,) she greatly desired the possession of Judea; but as Antony was equally in want of money to sustain him in his contest with Octavius, Herod supplied him, and continued to reign.

After the fall of Antony, Herod waited upon Octavius, and by his frank and candid deportment secured the friendship of the sole governor of the great Roman empire. Prior to this time, Herod had lured the aged Hyrcanus from his captivity in Parthia, and, after placing him in close *surveillance* for several years, had him beheaded. The future course of Herod was violent, miserable, and vile. He labored, on the one hand, to make his kingdom great, and his country magnificent; but his means of effecting this were most atrocious: while, on the other hand, his conduct to his family was suspicious and cruel.

In his public life he consolidated his power, and raised Judea to a state of wealth and prosperity which it had not before attained for centuries. Having by the most sanguinary means cut off the last of the Asmoneans, he built a theatre in Jerusalem, and a spacious amphitheatre in the suburbs. All kinds of heathenish games were introduced. Musicians, players, courses, gladiators, and wild beasts, were exhibited in the holy city. And it is a circumstance worthy of observation, that there yet existed sufficient zeal for the Divine

law to render all these exceedingly disgusting to a great body of the Jewish people. About this time Herod also rebuilt several important fortresses, and restored Samaria, which had long lain in ruins. He also adorned Jerusalem with a stately palace for himself, which was built of the most costly materials, and of exquisite workmanship.

Yet all these things were performed in a manner and style so foreign to the peculiar genius of the Jewish mind, that, proud as they were of their country, they were by these means more and more alienated from the king. He saw this, and labored to stem the torrent of public feeling. At one time he wished to introduce an oath of allegiance; but it was so strenuously opposed by the most eminent Jewish doctors, that he was compelled to lay it aside. He then remitted a part of the taxes, professedly on account of several national calamities which had recently fallen upon the country, but really to bid for popular favor: this also was vain. One other course was open to him; and he pursued it. The temple, as then existing, was unworthy of the nation, and of the improved state of Jerusalem: he proposed to rebuild it; but so distrustful were the people of his promise and of his religion, that they would not have the old one removed until they saw the materials collected for the new building. After two years of preparation, the old edifice was taken down in parts, as the new one was raised. The holy place was finished in eighteen months, the body of the structure in eight years.* This building was erected in the Greek style of architecture, and of the most costly and beautiful marble and other materials; and the great work appears to some extent to have produced a better state of feeling between the Jews and their king.

Yet, during all these works, Herod's domestic course was one of continued misery and crime. As if the blood through which he had waded to the throne, and the numerous victims which in these times of turbulence and war were sacrificed to his ambition, were not sufficient to satiate his sanguinary nature, his lovely wife, Mariamne, after having borne him two sons, was doomed by his order to perish on the scaffold, the victim of the most groundless jealousy and cruel conspiracy. He endeavored to bury this crime in oblivion by other marriages, but in vain. Intense suspicion haunted all his thoughts; a morbid apprehension of evil destroyed every acquisition, and turned all the members of his family into foes. Under this influence, after years of disquiet, he condemned his two sons by Mariamne to death. It were useless to attempt the history of this family at greater length. Herod married ten wives, eight of whom

* The ornamenting of this new building was carried on until the time of Agrippa, which justifies John ii, 20.

bore him children. This was not the least amongst the causes of his domestic misery.

Meanwhile, Octavius Cæsar, under his new name of Augustus, reigned the absolute monarch of the Roman empire. Every element of national disorder sank before the genius and temper with which he conducted the government. Throughout this wide dominion and its dependencies, war had ceased, the temple of Janus was shut, and then God's Messiah, the long-promised and predicted ONE, appeared among men.

REMARKABLE EVENTS FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENCE TO THE TIME OF CHRIST.

<i>In the History of the Jews.</i>	B.C.	<i>In those Nations with which the Jews held political relations.</i>	B.C.
A Grant of Independence obtained	143		
Money coined by Simon, and all public Documents referred to the Year of his Government	—		
The Syrian Fort on Mount Sion taken	142		
Simon murdered by his Son-in-law, and John Hyrcanus succeeds as Prince and Priest	135	Antiochus Sidetes reigns in Syria	139
Samaritan Temple destroyed	129		
Idumeans subdued and incorporated	—		
Samaria destroyed by Hyrcanus	109		
John's fatal Breach with the Pharisees	108		
ARISTOBULUS I. succeeds John	106		
— Assumes the Title of King, and regal State	—		
ALEXANDER JANNEUS succeeds Aristobulus	105		
Civil War of six Years' Duration	—		
— Closed by an Act of atrocious Cruelty	86		
Itureans conquered and incorporated	—		
QUEEN ALEXANDRA succeeds her Husband	78		
— Reconciled to the Pharisees, who return to Power ..	—		
Hyrcanus High Priest	—		
HYRCANUS II. King (3 months)	69		
Aristobulus II. King and High Priest	69		
Jerusalem taken by Pompey	63		
HYRCANUS II. restored as Prince and Priest	—		
Judea divided into five Districts, and its Government an Aristocracy	56		
The Temple plundered by Crassus	54	Pompey slain	48
Hyrcanus restored to the Government, and the aristocratic Government ended	47		
The Walls of Jerusalem rebuilt	47	Cæsar slain	44
Antipater poisoned	43	Battle of Philippi	42
Parthians take Syria, and raise ANTIGONUS to be King and Priest	40		
Herod inaugurated King of Judea in the Roman Capitol, by order of the Senate	—	Octavius Cæsar receives the Title of Augustus, and the Government of the Empire	27
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Ananelus High Priest	36		
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Ananelus restored	—		
The Temple rebuilt, begun 17, finished	7		

CHAPTER XII.

THE RELIGION OF THE HEBREWS FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE TIME OF CHRIST.

STATE OF RELIGION AFTER THE RESTORATION—Ezra and Nehemiah—Messianic Prophecies of Haggai—Of Zechariah—And of Malachi—THE DOCTRINES HELD RESPECTING THE DIVINE NATURE, AND THE PROMISED REDEEMER—The Jews believed in a Plurality in the Divine Existence—Which is limited to three—But they did not regard the promised Messiah as one of these—But expected him as a Prophet and Prince who would act under the Guidance of a visible Revelation of the glorious Word, as Moses did—THE ORDINANCES OF RELIGION, INSTRUCTION, AND WORSHIP—The Services of the Temple—And of the Synagogue, including reading the Scriptures, Preaching, Prayer, and religious conversational Intercourse—Efficiency of these Means—THE PECULIARITIES, CHARACTER, AND INFLUENCE OF THE SEVERAL RELIGIOUS SECTS WHICH OBTAINED AT THIS TIME—The Pharisees—Their Origin—Distinguished by great apparent Sanctity of Life—Doctrines and Power—Their Influence opposed to the Purposes of Grace—The Sadducees—Their Origin—Doctrines—Learning and Wealth—The Essenes—Their Doctrines—Institutions—Worship—And Character—THE VIEWS ENTERTAINED ON PERSONAL RELIGION—Repentance—Pardon—Faith—The Effect of these Doctrines practically destroyed by the Adoption of Tradition—A Reliance on Rites—And the Rejection of spiritual Religion.

WHEN, by the gracious providence of Jehovah, the Jewish people were restored to their own land, the important objects for which they had been raised up and preserved were neither superseded nor forgotten. The great purpose of God was still carried on. Much as had been already done by the communication of law, by unceasing special interposition, by prophetic revelations, it appeared necessary to continue the latter means during the gradual reconstruction of the Jewish polity, and the restoration of the national faith in the land of Judea. For this purpose, inspired men were raised up, and divinely qualified for the important work; and the gift of prophecy was, for a further season, continued. To the influence of these holy men it will be necessary to direct passing attention.

Ezra and Nehemiah were the principal agents in the re-establishment of the Hebrew people. The first of these was a scribe and a priest. He devoted himself, with unwearied assiduity, to restore the ecclesiastical economy of Moses. In order to this, he reformed abuses, enforced the law, and instructed the people. The latter work he carried into effect by giving expositions of the law. The people, having been so long accustomed to the Chaldee dialect, could not clearly understand the letter of their ancient language; and they had been for so many years prevented from conforming to some parts of the ceremonial law, that they were ignorant of several important requirements. To remedy these evils, Ezra taught them the sense of the written law, and strongly enforced its observance.

Nehemiah was appointed governor by royal authority; and he took care to exert all his power and influence to place the civil and political parts of the sacred code in full efficiency. Numerous disorders had been also introduced into this department of the state; but nothing could resist the persevering attempts of this devoted man. After long and diligent efforts, he had the happiness of seeing his measures crowned with success. These two Jewish statesmen will ever stand out in the history of the world, as models of public spirit, patriotism, disinterestedness, and ability. It is their honor that they not only greatly advanced the temporal interests of their country, but largely contributed to purify and restore its religion.

The prophets who were called to minister during this period are Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The former two were contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah, and aided, by their revelations, the important work in which these noble men were engaged. As reference has been already made to the substance of these communications, our attention may be confined to those parts of their prophecies which, by enlarging their knowledge of Divine truth, exerted a direct influence upon the national religion. The principal portions of this kind in the writings of Haggai, are his prediction that the glory of the second temple should exceed that of the former. Chap. ii, 1-19. The manner in which the prophecy was given must, even at that time, have made it refer to the promised Messiah. It announced this glory as something altogether different from, and far above, all temporal grandeur: (verse 3:) it is said to arise out of a remarkable operation of the Holy Spirit. Verse 5. It was to be the result of mighty power, which should effect great changes in the world. Verses 6, 7. This glory is expressly pointed out as identified with the coming of the "Desire of all nations;" and, lastly, the peace of God is promised as its great result. These points could only be expected to meet in the case of the promised Redeemer.

Zechariah was also honored to be the instrument of shedding increasing light upon the hope of redemption. The first passage to which attention is directed, is chap. iii, 8, 9. This is more explicit in the original than our authorized version renders it. The words, "For they are men wondered at," might have been better translated, "men who are a sign," or "a type." The idea is, that they are figurative or typical men. This prevents the application of the promised servant, the BRANCH, from being confounded with Joshua. The clause in the Chaldee is read, "My servant the Messiah." And this is unquestionably the intent of the words.—The following words, verse 9, are beautiful. This promised ONE is spoken of, as he had

been by Isaiah, (chap. xxviii, 16,) as a foundation-stone. But this stone was not to be left plain; it was to be engraven; and, instead of hieroglyphic figures, or any ordinary device, it was to bear an inscription of the great truth, "I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." Thus did this text iterate the prediction so clearly stated by Daniel. A second passage in the prophecy is based on the same idea, but further amplified. Joshua is again put forward in a typical character. Crowns of gold are made for him, and he is again set forth as the BRANCH. Here also the Chaldee has, "Whose name is my MESSIAH," or "CHRIST." Zech. vi, 12. This glorious person is here referred to under the similitude of Joshua. As he had to build the Jewish temple, so should Messiah erect the gospel church, in which, as "a priest upon his throne," he should reveal the counsel of peace. Verse 13.

A further prophecy of the Saviour is found in this book, (chap. xi, 12, 13;) but, as it does not appear probable that the reference could have been understood at that time, it is not necessary to quote it.

Malachi, of whose personal history we know nothing, appears to have lived and ministered in the time of Nehemiah. He severely reproves the Jews for their ingratitude and irreverence to God, on account of which they are threatened with rejection, and the calling of the Gentiles into high spiritual privilege is formally announced. Chap. i, 11. This prophet also speaks of the coming of the LORD Messiah to his temple, and specially announces Elias as the messenger to prepare his way before him. Chap. iii, 1; iv, 5.

Thus, to the end of the Old-Testament canon, was the spirit of these revelations maintained, and the promise of the Messiah and his approaching kingdom kept with unvarying constancy before the Jewish Church. This leading idea of revelation was accompanied by many other important communications of truth, as well as by continued Divine interposition.

It now becomes our serious duty to ascertain the result of all these Divine revelations; to obtain a clear and complete idea of the effects which it produced on the Hebrew mind, with regard to the great subject of redemption. This will be most effectually done, by directing our special attention to the following important particulars: The doctrines which the Jews of this period believed respecting the Divine nature and the promised Redeemer; their ordinances of religion, instruction, and worship; the several sects, or religious parties, which gradually grew up amongst them, under the influence of difference of opinion and practice; and the views which obtained respecting personal religion, and their relation to the Scriptural teaching of the law and the prophets. If we succeed in eliciting the

truth in respect of these several subjects, we shall apprehend with tolerable accuracy their religious character and condition during the closing chapter of their history as the elect people of God.

In prosecuting these inquiries, it will not be sufficient for our purpose to ascertain and condense the intended meaning of the writings of Moses and of the prophets. This will engage our attention as an important element in the investigation; but our principal effort will be directed to ascertain how far the intended sense of Scripture was apprehended and understood by the Jewish people, so as to be wrought up into the doctrines of that church, and made the professed standard of their faith and hope. Happily for us, the Jews had by this time acquired a religious literature; which, if not avowedly doctrinal, has, by embodying the national life and manners, in a spirit of harmony with the Old-Testament Scriptures, done much to furnish the means of supplying the requisite information. (See *Appendix*, note 114.)

In endeavoring to give a brief summary of the doctrines which the Jews held respecting the Divine existence of the promised Redeemer, it will be necessary, first, to show that they believed in a plurality in the Divine Nature.

The remarkable assertion of David, "The Lord said unto my Lord," (Psalm cx, 1,) had not been lost from the Jewish mind; the author of Ecclesiasticus used a similar mode of expression with a deeper compass of meaning: "I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord." *Ecclus.* li, 10. Here the idea of Father and Son in the Godhead appears to be distinctly recognized. In the Book of Wisdom, the Word is spoken of as a Divine Person: "'Thine Almighty Word leaped down from heaven, out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war into the midst of a land of destruction.'" *Wisdom* xviii, 15.

The same point is shown by the view which the Jews took of some remarkable passages of Scripture; as, for instance, the Seventy have used, in their version, a method of rendering some places of the prophets which clearly shows that these eminent men regarded the Angel of the Covenant as Divine. Hence they translate that clause of the remarkable prophecy, (*Isa.* ix, 6,) "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor," &c., by the words, "His name is called the Messenger of great counsel;" language which clearly ascribes to the Angel or Messenger the same dignity as was awarded to the Lord himself. Again: that text which, rendered from the Hebrew, is, "The Angel of his presence saved them," they have made, "Himself saved them." *Isa.* lxiii, 9. (*Allix's Judgment of the Jewish Church*, p. 109.)

As it is evident to every reader of the Bible, that the sacred writers have used language which implies plurality of persons in the Deity, so it is equally evident from the Apocrypha, Philo, and other Jewish authorities, that this mode of speaking continued in use, and consequently the plurality in the Godhead continued to be recognized, even to the time of Christ. On this point no question can be raised: the doubt is, whether it included a belief of a Trinity, in the Christian sense of the term. Bishop Russel has here given us a very sound and excellent judgment. He is of opinion that, "although the Hebrews entertained the belief of a plurality of hypos-tases in the Godhead, they had not gained, in respect to the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity, those distinct conceptions which are supplied by the Gospel, and illustrated by the history of redemption. But the reader must be aware, that this inference only applies to the creed of the Hebrews, considered in a national capacity; for that the true doctrine relative to the Divine Nature was known to the patriarchs, as well as to the inspired teachers under the law, cannot, it is presumed, admit of any rational doubt. He who saw the Redeemer's day afar off, and was glad, could not, we may be satisfied, have been left in ignorance as to the character of the adorable personage upon whose mission and exertions such exalted hopes were placed. Nor is it probable that the inspired father of the Israelitish tribes, who predicted the blessings which were to be poured upon the world, under the sceptre of Shiloh the Prince of Peace, was denied all knowledge of the relation in which that Deliverer stood to the great Sovereign of the universe."—*Connection*, vol. i, p. 284.

Cudworth believes that the Israelites arrived at the knowledge of the Trinity by slow degrees: he says, "This mystery was gradually imparted to the world, and at first but sparingly to the Hebrews themselves."—*Intellectual System*, vol. ii, p. 313. Dr. Allix contends not only that the Jews had "a notion of a plurality in God," but also, "that the same Jews did acknowledge a Trinity in the Divine Nature."

The first step in the investigation of this point, is to refer to the manner in which this plurality is mentioned, and the number to which it seems limited. In doing so, it may be desirable to inquire into the sentiments of Philo. Although this Jewish writer, in the various works which he bequeathed to posterity, has spoken very fully on the question before us, he has carefully avoided the error into which many of his successors have fallen. He did not attempt to explain this cardinal doctrine of revealed truth. While boldly maintaining a plurality in the Deity, he "asserts that the nature of God is incomprehensible, that is, that we cannot form a just idea

of it;" that "God's providence and existence are known to us; but as to his essence, we are altogether ignorant of it." The same author further observes, "that Moses, the lawgiver of the Jews, made this his chief end, to destroy the notion of polytheism." He then affirms, that, though it is said, "God is one;" yet this is not to be understood with respect to number. Not that Philo would have it thought that there is more than one God; but hereby he intimates the unity of God to be transcendent, to have nothing in common with that of other beings which fall under number. Further than this, Philo acknowledges "a generation in God. If you would ask him what he begets, he will tell you 'that God begets his Word,' who is therefore said to be not unbegotten like God, and yet not begotten like his creatures. And on account of this generation, he calls him the first-born of God. Again: Philo says that God begets his Wisdom, and that his Wisdom is the same with his Word. But the reader must not suppose that the learned Jew thought that this generation was some act of Deity which occurred during the progress of time: he, on the contrary, says, the Word of God is the eternal Son of God. Nor did Philo think that this plurality respected the attributes of God. In contradistinction from such an opinion, he asserts that these powers made the world, or that by them God created the world: that these external powers appeared, acted, and spoke as real persons, and in a visible and sensible manner."—*Allix's Judgment*, p. 122. And again: when speaking of the three angels appearing to Abraham, Philo says, "God attended with his two supreme powers, principality and goodness; being himself but one in the middle of these two, makes these three appearances to the seeing soul, which is represented by Abraham."—*Ibid.*, p. 148. And to prevent the possibility of any misapprehension, Philo "warns his readers that this is a mystery, not to be communicated to every one, but only to them that are capable to understand and to keep it to themselves, lest the people might misunderstand it, and thereby fall into polytheism."—*Ibid.*, p. 149.

The ancient Jews further regarded one of these Divine Persons as the Logos or Word. Hence Philo says, that the Logos is begotten of God; and that the Word acted and spoke in all the Divine appearances that are mentioned in the Old Testament. These sentiments are universally sustained. "The Chaldee Paraphrases are full of notions and expressions relating to the Word, conformable to those of Philo touching the Logos. They almost always distinguish the *Memra*, or Word of the Lord, which answers to Philo's *Logos*, from the *Pithgama*, which signifies 'a matter of a discourse,' as *ρῆμα* does in Greek. They ascribe the creation of the world to the Word;

the Word that saved Noah, and made a covenant with him. Gen. vii, viii. They say that Abraham believed in the Word, which thing was imputed to him for righteousness, Gen. xv, 6; that the Word brought Abraham out of Chaldea, (ONKELOS on Gen. xv, 7,) and commanded him to sacrifice, (*ibid.*, 9,) and gave him the prophecy, related verse 15."—*Allix's Judgment*, p. 184.

The Targum of Onkelos on Exodus and Leviticus exhibits the same opinions. It is the Word that redeemed Israel out of Egypt. Exod. xx, 2. It is the Word whose presence is promised in the tabernacle, (Exod. xxx, 6,) which is repeated, Num. viii, 19. It was the Word, whose commandments the Israelites were to observe carefully. Lev. viii, 35; xxii, 9. The Word meets Balaam, (Num. xxiii,) and opens his eyes, xxii, 31. Instances of this sort might be cited in great numbers; but enough has been said to show that the ancient Jews not only believed that a plurality of persons existed in the Godhead, but also that one of these was in some sense a Father, and that the begotten of him was Divine and eternal, and spoken of as the *Memra* or *Logos*, the Word.

In addition to this, a careful inquiry discovers, in the same sources of information, a distinct recognition of another Divine Person as one of this plurality, who is sometimes called the *Shekinah*, and at others the Spirit of holiness. In the Book of Wisdom, one person of this plurality is spoken of under the titles of Word and Wisdom: "O God of my fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things with" (or rather by) "thy Word, and ordained man through thy Wisdom." "And thy counsel who hath known, except thou give Wisdom, and send thy Holy Spirit from above." Wisdom ix, 1, 2, 17. Here three persons are distinctly noticed: 1. God, who is addressed as the giver; 2. The Word and Wisdom; 3. The Holy Spirit. This distinction in respect of the Son is clearly maintained by the author of Ecclesiasticus, in a passage already cited, "I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord." Ecclus. li, 10.

The judgment of Dr. Russel, which has been referred to, is therefore fully sustained; while a comparison of his opinion with that of the learned Cudworth may lead to a just view of the whole case. The latter eminent author thinks the Hebrews obtained a knowledge of this doctrine gradually, while the former believes that Abraham, as well as the inspired teachers under the law, were well acquainted with it; although, with respect to the nation at large, their understanding of the tenet was very imperfect. To a certain extent both these opinions appear to be correct; while in other respects they are either defective or erroneous.

The bishop is undoubtedly correct in ascribing to Abraham a

knowledge of the doctrine of a Trinity, although it seems equally certain that the successive revelations made to Moses, David, Isaiah, and other inspired men, cast increasing light upon this sublime truth. Nor can there be any reasonable doubt, that, notwithstanding this, the faith of the Jewish Church came far short of that splendor which the rays of gospel truth have shed on the subject. In another respect, Russel has not fully carried out his view of the case, and Cudworth's opinion is incorrect. Why did Abraham, and others of the eminent Jews, attain a clearer knowledge of the Trinity than their neighbors? Certainly, because of their eminent faith and piety. Then it follows, that while the Jewish Church had men who were fully consecrated to the service of God, there was a gradual increase of this knowledge; but that, when piety waned, and men became carnal, sensual, and worldly, then even the knowledge that had been attained, faded, and became more uncertain and defective in respect of the public mind than it had before been. This opinion is in precise accordance with the nature of the doctrine itself, and its relation to the economy of grace. It was certainly one of pure revelation, and from the first had been essentially wrought up into the scheme of human redemption. It could not, therefore, be excogitated by intellectual energy. Nor can we understand how it could have been presented to the mind, in all its technical completeness, as a doctrine, while the mysterious problem of the incarnation was unsolved. At that early period, especially, the tenet appears to have stood before the Hebrews, as certain others do now in the Christian Church; in respect of which, the information revealed, while communicating a certain amount of knowledge, is not sufficient to give the mind a perfect apprehension of the intended truth in the absence of personal faith, and its consequent individual experience.

Yet these great elements of the doctrine appear to have been known; namely, a plurality of hypostases in the Deity, which were limited to three; and these were severally regarded as God, who is sometimes spoken of as a Father, God, the begotten One, who is also called the Word, and Wisdom; and God, who is called the Holy Spirit the Sanctifier; and that these opinions of the Divine Nature were held in subjection to, and under the influence of, an invincible belief in the Divine unity. Yet the reader should be reminded, that Philo regarded the doctrine as so full of mystery, that it ought not to be freely taught, lest it should lead the people into polytheism: a sentiment which seems to prove that, while the subject was generally confined to the learned, even they had defective views of the true nature of the doctrine.

But what light did these views of Deity impart to the important subject of redemption, and to the person and work of the predicted Messiah? On this point, although the best writers teach opposite opinions, there will be no great difficulty in coming to a satisfactory conclusion. Taking the Old Testament as a whole, and uniting all its teaching upon this subject, condensing its several rays of light to a focal point, all doubt is removed, and it appears incontestably evident that the Messiah which was to come was the same with the acting and revealed Jehovah of Moses and the prophets, whom the Jewish fathers spoke of as the *Memra* and *Logos*, and who was the Second Person in the Trinity, and, as such, was truly and properly God. But were the Jews, from the restoration of Jerusalem to the time of Christ, acquainted with this fact? Did they believe this truth? Dr. Allix boldly asserts the affirmative. He contends that the Jews did acknowledge that the Messiah should be the Son of God; and that the Messiah was represented in the Old Testament as being Jehovah who should come, and that the ancient synagogue did believe him to be so. This learned writer frankly admits the difficulty of the case, by showing that "while *Logos* is considered as the Lord of heaven and earth, the Messiah is spoken of as one that should appear in a very mean condition; and whatsoever glory is attributed to him in other places of the ancient revelation, which brought them to believe till the last times that the shekinah was to be in him, there were some characters which could hardly be applied to him as being personally the Word himself. Such are his sufferings, described Psalm xxii, and Isaiah liii. Such is his riding upon an ass, and coming to Jerusalem, which they refer constantly to the Messiah."—*Allix*, p. 254. This contrariety of character, these apparently conflicting predictions, must necessarily have greatly obscured the promises of a Redeemer, and especially on the point of his proper personality,—whether he would be the Son of God, or another being.

It is a remarkable fact, that, in endeavoring to support his opinion, Dr. Allix, who was profoundly versed in all the wide range of Scriptural and rabbinical literature, does not supply us with a single direct proof in favor of his position. This is not his usual course. No writer ever displayed more research in procuring pertinent authorities, or more ability and zeal in their production and arrangement, than he has usually evinced. Yet here, instead of these, we find many pages, not of proofs, but of data, from whence the Jews might and ought to have deduced the important doctrines which he supposes them to have held; grounding this supposition mainly upon the fact that they had ample means for the purpose. One specimen of this kind of proof shall be given; and it is one of the

most direct and cogent: "In Isaiah iv, 2, the Messiah is called the 'branch of the Lord,' no doubt as properly as he is called the branch of David, Jer. xxiii, 5. 'In that day,' saith he, 'the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious;' which is, in Jonathan's paraphrase, interpreted of the Messiah. From which it is natural to conclude, that the proper Son of God was to be the Messiah, and the Messiah was to be the proper Son of God." This mode of proof will not be satisfactory to the reader: and least of all on such a subject as this. It is freely admitted that the truth was sufficiently revealed; but the question is, Was it clearly apprehended? This point is not touched by the quotation. That the terms, "the branch of the Lord," were understood to imply the essential Divinity of the Son of God, is presumed, not established.

The point, therefore, is not only really unproved by the arguments adduced in its support by this learned writer; on the contrary, it is opposed by considerable direct evidence. The Jewish people of that day, instead of apprehending the full meaning of the prophets, and thus obtaining distinct ideas of the incarnation, and of the union of the *Logos*, or Divine Word, with the promised seed in one person as the Messiah, drew a marked distinction between these two, and in their theology generally regarded them as separate beings.

In proof of this, it may be first observed, that Philo, who has written so largely on the Divine plurality, and on the *Logos* or Word, as one of the Divine hypostases or persons, *never once mentions or directly alludes to the Messiah*; a fact which could scarcely have been possible, if this learned writer had believed that the Divine Word was to be incarnated in Him. In the Targum of Onkelos, there is not only the same absence of evangelical allusions, but one passage which seems plainly to refer to a supposed distinction between the Messiah and the Word. Upon the remarkable prediction of Moses, in which he speaks of the Messiah as "a prophet," the Targum reads, "If any man will not obey my words which that *Prophet* shall speak in my name, my WORD shall require it of him." Here the *Prophet*, and the *Word*, are clearly regarded as two perfectly distinct persons, and, consequently, if one was regarded as the promised Messiah, the other is plainly distinguished from him.

In the Jerusalem Targum, the same distinction is found. On Exod. xii, 42, describing the final consummation, it says, "Moses will go forth out of the midst of the desert, and the King Messiah out of the midst of Rome. The one shall go before in a cloud, and the other shall go before in a cloud, and the WORD of the Lord shall be Leader between both." The Targum of Jonathan affords similar evidence. In the prophecy of Balaam, Num.

xxiii, 21, it reads, "The WORD of the Lord their God is their help, and the shout of the King Messiah is among them." Again, the same upon Deut. xxx, 4, has this passage: "If your dispersions be to the utmost boundaries of the heavens, thence shall the Word of the Lord gather you by the hand of Elias the high priest, and thence shall he lead you by the hand of the King Messiah." In all these cases the Messiah is not only plainly distinguished from the Divine WORD, but is also spoken of as occupying a position precisely similar to that of Moses and Elias.

The Scripture history fully confirms this view of Hebrew doctrine. When Jesus put his famous question, "What think ye of Christ? whose Son is he?" the Jews were ready to reply, "The Son of David." When, however, he urged, "How then doth David in spirit call him Lord?" they were confounded and speechless. Matt. xxii, 42-46. Why was this? If the current belief of the Jews embraced the divinity of the Messiah, the union of the Divine *Logos* with the seed of David, the second question would have been as easily answered as the first. The Saviour was repeatedly acknowledged as the Messiah in the familiar epithet, "Son of David:"—by blind men on two several occasions, Matt. xx, 30, 31; Mark x, 47; by the Syrophenician woman, Matt. xv, 22; and by the multitude at his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Matt. xxi, 9, 15. Indeed, so strong and so general was the impression of his Messiahship, that they were about to "come and take him by force, to make him a king." John vi, 15. This fact might be confirmed by the whole scope of the evangelists. And it appears that the Jews were prepared to admit his pretensions to very special and elevated privilege and distinction; yet when he claimed Divinity, he was instantly met with a torrent of opposition, and even encountered personal danger.

When "he represents himself as 'the light of the world,' (John viii, 12,) as the subject constantly of his Father's complacent presence, (verses 16, 29,) as 'from above,' (verse 23,) as 'the giver of spiritual freedom, and immortal life;' (verses 36, 51;) of what would otherwise have proved the most offensive part of this discourse, the reference was not understood, verse 27; and another part of his enemies represented it as the raving of a demoniac. Verses 48, 52. But beyond this none of his hearers proceeded, until he declared his pre-existence to Abraham, and his consequent Divinity. Verse 58. They then immediately broke into open violence, and attempted to inflict upon him the punishment by the Mosaic law adjudged to the blasphemer. Verse 59. Whatever he claimed short of Deity, they at least endured. (Treffry's "Inquiry into the Doctrine of the Eternal

Sonship of Jesus Christ," p. 91. In that valuable work this subject is most ably discussed.)

It might further be shown at length, that Jesus was condemned and put to death, not for claiming to be the Messiah, but for avowing himself the Son of God. When he was charged with pretending to be a King, he frankly admitted it. Luke xxiii, 1-3. But this was insufficient to secure his condemnation by Pilate. In short, nothing availed until it was said, "*We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the SON OF GOD.*" John xix, 7. This secured the intended purpose, and the Saviour was crucified. It is therefore evident, "1. That in the Messiah the Jews of this period expected a human Prophet and a human Sovereign only. 2. That even by one whose claims to the Messiahship were well authenticated and extensively admitted, the assumption of a Divine Sonship was regarded as inexpiable blasphemy. 3. That in their judgment, therefore, the Son of God was a title wholly distinct from that of the Messiah, and properly indicated sovereign and eternal Divinity."—*Ibid.*, p. 102.

If, proceeding with these inquiries, we endeavor to ascertain in what respect or manner the Logos and the Messiah were severally expected to bless the Jewish people, it appears that the Jews looked to the first as the immediate source of spiritual light and blessing. They supposed that in the days of the Messiah, the Shekinah would gloriously return and dwell again with Israel. To this they were encouraged by giving a literal rendering to the prophecy of Haggai, "I will fill this house with glory." Chap. ii, 7-9. Indeed, the Jews of this period regarded "indifferently this Wisdom, and the Shekinah, or the Memra or Logos, for the same person, referring to it the same actions, the same power, the same worship, the same majesty."—*Allix*, p. 272. This was expected to appear in a visible and glorious manner at the coming of the Messiah; for the Jews in the ages next to these paraphrases, said that God (had) descended nine times, and that the tenth time he shall descend in the age to come, that is, in the time of the Messiah. (*Ibid.*, p. 282.) This Divine Word, thus manifested, was regarded as Mediator between God and man, and as the means of communicating blessings to the human race through his intercession. (Bryant, p. 87.)

At the same time the Messiah was expected, as a teaching Prophet, who should govern Israel, and lead them to all happiness, dignity, and glory. This was regarded as so certain, that when the government was settled upon the Asmonean family, the remarkable reservation was made, "that Simon should be their governor and high priest forever, until there should arise a faithful prophet."

1 Macc. xiv, 41. This clearly refers to the Messiah, being founded upon the prediction of Moses, Deut. xviii, 15 ; and was the result of serious consultation among the "Jews and priests" of the time. Acts iii, 6. They therefore expected that the promised prophet, whatever other office he might hold, would come to supersede the reigning high priest, and thus restore the kingdom to Israel.

With respect, then, to the doctrines which the Jews held concerning the promise of redemption, the great defect appears to have been, that they failed to unite in one person all the prophecies bearing upon the case, and therefore looked for one more like Moses, who, acting under the guidance of the glorious Shekinah, the visible Jehovah, that had appeared in past ages, should raise them individually and nationally to happiness and glory. But here it is necessary to guard our meaning by a reference to the judicious opinion of Bishop Russel, that this must be regarded as "*the national faith.*" It can scarcely be doubted, that from Malachi to Simeon, there were many noble exceptions to this rule. Individual Jews of fervent piety and strong faith, if they could not fully apprehend the manner in which the Messianic prophecies would be accomplished, would nevertheless believe the fact, that the Divine Word, in all his spiritual glory, would rest upon the seed of David, and thus present to Israel an embodiment of salvation. Luke ii, 30.

It will now be necessary to notice the means of instruction and worship, which are found associated with the religion of the Jews during this period.

With respect to the ceremonial service of the temple, it will be sufficient to observe, that it was carried out with tolerable regularity, and, toward the end of this time, with great splendor. Notwithstanding all the chastisement administered by the captivity, the Jews at the restoration, although anxious to recover their former position, were far from being zealous for the restoration of the house of God ; and had to be frequently reproved and encouraged, before they could be induced to make the requisite exertion to complete the temple. And when this was done, its holy service was not adequately maintained. The last of the prophets had to complain, in the name of the Lord, "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar. Ye offer the blind for sacrifice. Ye offer the lame and sick." Mal. i, 7, 8. This wickedness appears to have been as much owing to the irreligion of the priests, as to the cupidity of the people. A more serious triad of charges could scarcely be preferred against ministers of the sanctuary than is brought against the priests of his time by this prophet : "Ye are departed out of the way ; ye have caused many to stumble at the law ; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord

of hosts." Chap. ii, 8. By this means religion was polluted at the fountain; for he continues, "Ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord." Verse 17. Hence, when the Messenger of the Lord, and the great Messiah, are promised, the object was to "purify the sons of Levi," to restore a faithful ministry. Chap. iii, 3.

The result of these delinquencies was, fearful religious declension. Men were found who were sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, oppressors; (verse 5;) and, even worse than this, the means of recovery were slighted, the sacred ordinances were neglected, the lawful contributions to the support of the temple and ministry were withheld, until the public opinion was, that it is vain to serve God, and profitless to observe his ordinances. Verse 14. This melancholy account is the last that revelation gives of the pre-Christian period. This has been referred to particularly, because the sin stands intimately connected with the abuse and neglect of the divinely appointed service of the temple.

But this fearful degeneracy was not universal. A few still remained faithful, and feared the Lord. They adopted measures to prevent the further spread of wickedness: "They spake often one to another." Verse 16. What is to be understood by this statement? It is certain that their conduct in this respect secured the Divine favor; for "the Lord hearkened and heard it;" he bent from his heavenly throne to hear their spiritual and pious intercourse, and put their names in his book, that in the great day of decision he might recognize and claim them for his own. But what was the nature and manner of this religious communion? There can be no reasonable doubt that it was held in synagogues and houses of prayer. Those who deem the opinions advanced in a preceding chapter tenable, will readily believe that a pious few had continued in succession, through the many generations from the time of David, to unite for spiritual worship. This was done in the days of Malachi; and these worshipers, holding spiritual intercourse, were regarded by God as the spiritual life of the whole people. The worship conducted in these synagogues consisted mainly of these important duties,—reading the Scriptures, prayer, and preaching.

The whole of the sacred writings were divided into suitable sections for this service, so that there might be a portion for every Sabbath. At first it is said the law only was read; but that being prohibited by the tyrant Antiochus, portions of the prophets were read instead, until, having obtained their freedom, they restored the reading of the law, and continued that of the prophets. Prayer made another part of this worship. The question has been earnestly debated,

whether this duty was performed extemporaneously, or by set forms provided for the purpose. It will not be necessary to discuss this controversy further than to say, that it does not appear to have been clearly proved that these liturgical pieces were used prior to the advent of Christ, although some of them seem to be very ancient, and possibly might have been so used. The third part of the service was, expounding the Scripture and preaching to the people. The origin of this exercise is lost in its antiquity. Enoch prophesied, (Jude 14,) and Noah was “a *preacher* of righteousness.” 2 Peter ii, 5. But the Jewish prophets were the first men of whom we have knowledge, who delivered religious addresses in continuous courses to the people. These were, however, different from what we now call preaching, which arose in that period of religious history now passing under our review, principally under the auspices, and by the efforts, of Nehemiah and Ezra.

These noble-minded and pious men not only exerted themselves to improve the temporal condition of their countrymen, but still more to advance their religious welfare. “The former was governor, and reformed the civil state; the latter was a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, and applied himself to ecclesiastical matters, in which he rendered the noblest service to his country and to all posterity. He collected and collated manuscripts of the sacred writings, and arranged and published the books of the holy canon in their present form. To this he added a second work, as necessary as the former; he revised and new-modeled public teaching, and exemplified his plan in his own person. The Jews had almost lost, in the seventy years’ captivity, their original language; that was now become dead; and they spoke a jargon, made up of their own language, and that of the Chaldeans, and other nations with whom they had been mingled. Formerly preachers had only explained subjects; now they were obliged to explain words; words which, in the sacred code, were become obsolete, equivocal, dead. Houses were now opened, not for ceremonial worship, as sacrificing, for this was confined to the temple; but for moral and religious instruction, praying, preaching, reading the law, Divine worship, and social duties. These houses were called synagogues: the people repaired thither for morning and evening prayer; and, on Sabbaths and festivals, the law was read and expounded to them. We have a short, but very beautiful description of the manner of Ezra’s first preaching, Neh. viii. Upwards of fifty thousand assembled in a street, or large square, near the water-gate. It was early in the morning of a Sabbath-day. A pulpit of wood, in the fashion of a small tower, was placed there on purpose for the preacher; and this turret was supported by a scaffold,

or temporary gallery, where, in a wing on the right hand of the pulpit, sat six of the principal preachers; and in another on the left, seven. Thirteen other principal teachers, and many Levites, were present also on scaffolds erected for the purpose, alternately to officiate. When Ezra ascended the pulpit, he produced and opened the book of the law, and the whole congregation instantly rose up from their seats and stood. Then he offered up prayer and praise to God, the people bowing their heads, and worshipping the Lord with their faces to the ground; and, at the close of the prayer, with uplifted hands, they solemnly announced, ‘Amen! Amen!’* Then, all standing, Ezra, assisted at times by the Levites, read the law distinctly, gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. The sermons delivered so affected the hearers, that they wept excessively; and about noon the sorrow became so exuberant and immeasurable, that it was thought necessary, by the governor, the preacher, and the Levites, to restrain it. ‘Go your way,’ said they, ‘eat the fat and drink the sweet, send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared.’ The wise and benevolent sentiments of these noble souls were imbibed by the whole congregation, and fifty thousand troubled hearts were calmed in a moment. Home they returned, to eat, to drink, to send portions, and rejoice, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them. Plato was living at this time, teaching dull philosophy to cold academics; but what was he, and what was Xenophon, or Demosthenes, or any of the Pagan orators, in comparison with these men? From this period to that of the appearance of Jesus Christ, public preaching was universal; synagogues were multiplied, vast numbers attended, and elders and rulers were appointed for the purpose of order and instruction.”—*Rev. R. Watson.*

As this synagogue-worship was calculated and intended to exercise a mighty influence over the religion of the Jewish people, it becomes important that we should have clear views of the manner in which it was conducted. The ministry was not confined to the priesthood, but open to Jews of every tribe, who possessed the requisite qualifications. But, that order might be preserved, there were in every synagogue some fixed ministers to superintend and conduct the religious worship. These were set apart by the imposition of hands, and solemnly admitted to the office. They are in the New Testament called “rulers of the synagogue.” How many of these were appointed to each synagogue, if there was a strict rule to that effect, does not appear to have been satisfactorily ascertained; but of the

* The completeness and order of this preparation show clearly that something like it, although upon a much less scale, had taken place before. There could not have been thirteen principal preachers, if there had not been preaching before.

whole, one was the president or chief ruler, who had the principal direction of its affairs. Besides these rulers, there were elders or heads of the synagogue, who, with others, formed a sort of college or governing body, under the direction of the chief ruler. The synagogue was not only a place for religious instruction and worship; it appears also to have been, to some extent, a place of religious judicature. The governing body, in each of these sacred establishments, were charged with the cognizance of such offenses against religion and morals as were brought to their knowledge. Hence we read of persons being beaten in the synagogue, and scourged in the synagogue. Matt. x, 17; Mark xiii, 9.

The mind can scarcely conceive of a more effective or complete range of agency than was thus raised up, to carry out the divinely revealed system of Judaism, to all those blessed results which it was intended to accomplish. There stood the temple on its appointed site; it might now be less gorgeous than when embellished and adorned by the unbounded wealth and elegant mind of Solomon; but it still retained all its sacred service. The daily sacrifices continued to be offered, the annual solemnities remained; the sacred ministrations of the priesthood, the sprinkling of the sacrificial blood, all the arrangements and rites of this holy place,—spoke heavenly language, and directed the mind of the worshiper thither. Even the lamented imperfection of this sanctuary,—the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat, the shekinah, the Urim and Thummim, the holy fire upon the altar, the spirit of prophecy; these, in which consisted the glory of the first sanctuary, were lost to the second; but their absence served only to give greater point to the promise of God, that He in whom all those glories met should soon appear, and shed the blessings of his heavenly presence in his own house.

Yet, notwithstanding the importance of the temple and its service to the Hebrew religion, it is easy to conceive that a feeling of necessity would arise for a closer and more intimate, if not a more majestic, intercourse with God, by the intermediation of certain solemnities, in which all and each of a congregation would have an individual share. Nor would this feeling of want wait for any other condition than an active religious sense, experienced in a population, of which only a small number could crowd or find room within the gates of the national temple. It was this feeling of want, aided by special inspiration for a particular national purpose besides, which raised the tabernacle of David; it was this which spread “dwelling-places of Zion” throughout Judea in the days of the prophets, and led the captive Jews to meet with the prophet Ezekiel for religious purposes; it was this which led to the establishment of synagogues

after the restoration, and spread these organized agencies of religious instruction and effective worship throughout the land of the Hebrews. Nor is it easy to conceive of anything better adapted to serve the intended purpose, of diffusing the practical influence of the Old Testament religion, than were these synagogues. Formed upon a model at once strictly Scriptural and liberal, adapted to the genius of the Hebrew mind, these sacred places diffused a knowledge of Scripture truth, enjoined religious devotedness, and were calculated to become nurseries of active piety, and centres of so many circles of practical godliness.

From the days of Ezra, the Hebrew people, to some extent, at least, possessed these important religious means. It cannot now be ascertained what time elapsed before synagogues became general; but we have seen that, notwithstanding the zealous efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah, Malachi had to address the most severe reproofs to the Jews of his day, for their neglect of the temple; and that these fell as heavily on the priests as on the people. It cannot, therefore, be supposed that, in this state of the public mind, much labor or money was expended in the extension of religious means and objects. The government of the province having been, after the removal of Nehemiah, vested in the high priesthood, was productive of infinite mischief; and this alteration can scarcely be accounted for but on the supposition, that it was now permitted, to show the lamentable consequences which must always result from the connection of civil and ecclesiastical offices in the same person, as a standing beacon for the guidance of the world in all successive generations.

It is to be feared that the first two hundred years from Ezra produced no improvement, but rather declension, in the religious condition of this people. The suicidal effort of Jason to introduce the Grecian games and the gymnasium into Jerusalem, could not have been made in an age of healthy and vigorous religious action. But what must be thought of the state of Jewish religion, when priests left their duties at the altar to contend naked in those games? This, with the treachery, lying, violence, and murder which characterized those who, about this time, successively obtained the high priesthood, prepared the nation for universal apostasy. And it is highly probable, that the infamous persecution of Antiochus, which followed soon afterward, iniquitous as it was in its character, and horrible in the atrocities which distinguished it, was the means, under the guidance of Divine Providence, of preserving the Hebrew religion and nation from utter ruin.

Hitherto the violence and corruption of the times had driven the pious into seclusion. But this aggression upon the vital interests

of Hebrew religion roused the dormant energies of the faithful ; and, although in a day of violence and blood, then began a new era of Hebrew improvement. Mattathias seemed well aware of the real cause of national danger ; and, therefore, although a proscribed fugitive, with a handful of followers, he warred rather with the infidelity of Israel, than with the soldiers of Syria. During three years, in these times of persecution and blood, were the services of the temple suspended, until grass had grown over the sacred courts. But Heaven favored the cause of the Maccabees. Judas restored the government of Jerusalem and the service of the temple, and thus opened a career of religious progress to his country.

From this time, although Judea was frequently torn by faction, and the temple pillaged by sordid tyrants, the Jews suffered no serious aggression on their religion ; and, in despite of numerous interruptions which civil and foreign wars must have created, the organization and progress of Mosaic institutions were carried forward. After the accession of Herod, under the favor of the Romans, this prosperity was increased. The temple was rebuilt in an elegant and costly style, its service was maintained with liberality and splendor, the priesthood was numerous, greatly respected, and possessed immense influence ; while the means of affording the people, in the several localities of their residence, the opportunities of religious instruction and worship, had multiplied to an amazing extent. Not only were many synagogues erected in all the provincial towns, but it is said that, at the time of Christ, there were above four hundred of them in Jerusalem alone : so that when Judea was expecting the appearance of the promised Redeemer, and when Jesus appeared among them, the whole frame-work of their ecclesiastical polity, and all the collateral means and appliances supplied by Providence for bringing the Mosaic economy in all its energy before every mind, and insuring its utmost practical effect, were in the most extended and vigorous operation.

The principal feature of the Jewish religion throughout this period, is the rise, progress, character, and influence of the several religious sects which arose, and greatly affected the opinions and piety of the Hebrew people.

The first and most remarkable of these were the PHARISEES, who were so called from the word *pharash*, which signifies "separation." The wisdom and peculiar adaptation of the Mosaic institutions, as well as the effectiveness of the divinely appointed manner of their administration, are seen in the fact, that, notwithstanding the restless and daring energy of the Hebrew character, for many centuries after the death of the legislator no division into sects was known in

Israel. Nor is it until after the captivity that we meet with anything important of this kind. The subjection of Judea to the Chaldeans, the ruin of Jerusalem, and the expatriation of the people to the land of their conquerors, probably sowed the seed which afterward sprang up and produced Pharisaism. While the Hebrews dwelt in the East, they must have been subjected to influences of opinion in respect of religion, politics, and philosophy, with which previously they had not been brought into contact. Returning to their own land, and rearing up again the fabric of the commonwealth, with all its attendant institutions, these influences, to which they had been so long exposed, would certainly be found in operation; and hence the perceptible difference in the character of the people. Nor is it likely that all would alike feel the force of this foreign influence, or have their minds warped by its power in an equal degree. Hence the evident fact, that while, previously, the people had "dwelt alone," under their own religious and political economy, they had scarcely a tendency to divide into sects; but now they were so situated as scarcely to avoid it.

It is highly probable that to these circumstances the origin of the Pharisees is to be attributed. Men who revered the rigid Mosaism of ancient times; whose minds still cherished dreamy recollections of the pomp, and splendor, and ceremonial glory, with which their religious ordinances had been celebrated; persons who dreaded lest Judaism should lose aught of its peculiar and exclusive character, whether under the influence of any further development of revelation, or through the agency of Gentile philosophy;—these persons were gradually drawn together. The sympathy of kindred views, and of a common object, made, at first a party, and at length a sect.

In every preceding crisis of Hebrew history, the light of revelation had been thrown on the scene, direct from its heavenly source, which, to the faithful, was a sure guide. But now the Old-Testament canon had been closed. The flashing glories with which the revelations of God's truth came to his people in their perils and conflicts, had, with the passing away of the events which called them forth, become mellowed, and united into a kind of lunar radiance, which, while showing the world a view of what God had done and promised, held it in waiting for the appearance of the great Messiah. In those circumstances, the men who aimed at restoring to the Hebrew people all their ancient peculiarity, had to direct their efforts to antiquarian research, to gather together all the obsolete expositions of law, to collect all the records of ancient usage and practice; and thus, while professing to protect and defend old institutions, in reality to erect new standards and new authorities. In the use of

these means, they would repel innovation, would resist any progressive development of Hebraism which the united energy of the prophetic theology might inspire. (See *Appendix*, note 115.)

This was the rise and vocation of the Pharisees. But in carrying out their plans they had to meet the advocates for reform, the abettors of philosophy, in discussion and argument: to this branch of their work they devoted themselves with great diligence. Hence Josephus describes them as one of the "philosophic sects" of the Jews.

As our principal information respecting this sect is derived from Josephus, who was himself one of them, it may be necessary to refer briefly to his statements. He says, "The Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances, by succession from their fathers, which are not written in the law of Moses; and for this reason it is that the Sadducees reject them, and say that we are to esteem those observances to be obligatory which are in the written word, but are not to observe what are derived from tradition of our forefathers."—*Antiq.*, b. xiii, ch. x, sect. 6. This important passage explicitly states, what would else have been sufficiently evident, that the Pharisees collected, preserved, and arranged that body of tradition which, under their influence, was regarded as the great authoritative expositor of the law. Hence we are also told, "The Pharisees are those who are esteemed most skillful in the exact explication of the laws."—*Wars*, b. ii, ch. x, sect. 14. Again: "There was a certain sect that were Jews, who valued themselves highly upon the exact skill they had in the law of their fathers, and made men believe they were highly favored by God."—*Antiq.*, b. xvii, ch. ii, sect. 4. And, further, "The Pharisees are a sect of the Jews that appear more religious than others, and seem to interpret the laws more accurately."—*Wars*, b. i, ch. v, sect. 2. This claim of the Pharisees to superior holiness and greater knowledge is confirmed by the general tenor of the Gospels. Their most solemn addresses to God breathed this spirit: "I thank thee, that I am not as other men are," (Luke xviii, 11;) and the most sensible observation of others, if opposed to their views, was met by the contemptuous interrogation, "Dost thou teach us?" John ix, 34; vii, 48. The Pharisees, then, as a sect, were distinguished for pretensions to superior sanctity and knowledge of the law.

As to their manner of life and religious tenets, Josephus says, "They live meanly, and despise delicacies in diet; and they follow the conduct of reason; and what that prescribes to them as good for them, they do; and they think they ought earnestly to strive to observe reason's dictates for practice. They also pay a respect to

such as are in years ; nor are they so bold as to contradict them in anything which they have introduced ; and, when they determine that all things are done by fate, they do not take away the freedom from men of acting as they think fit, since the notion is, that it hath pleased God to make a temperament, whereby what he wills is done, but so that the will of man can act virtuously or viciously. They also believe that souls have an immortal vigor in them, and that, under the earth, there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life ; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again ; on account of which doctrines, they are able greatly to persuade the body of the people ; and whatsoever they do about Divine worship, prayers, and sacrifices, they perform them according to their direction ; insomuch that the cities give great attestations to them, on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives, and their discourses also."

—*Antiq.*, b. xviii, ch. i, sect. 3. Again : The Pharisees "ascribe all to fate (or providence) and to God ; and yet allow, that, to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of men, although fate does co-operate in every action. They say that all souls are incorruptible ; but that the souls of good men are only removed into other bodies, but that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment."—*Wars*, b. ii, ch. viii, sect. 14. Further : "The bodies of all men are mortal, and are created out of corruptible matter ; but the soul is ever immortal, and is a portion of the Divinity that inhabits our bodies."—*Ibid.*, b. iii, ch. viii, sect. 5. As far as the New-Testament writers touch upon these points, they confirm this account of the Jewish historian. Their minute attention to the external requirements of the law is mentioned, *Matt.* xxiii, 23 ; their extreme care of exhibiting a fair show of holiness, verses 25–27. In accordance with their general doctrines, they regarded the act rather than the motive. *Luke* xi, 39 ; xviii, 11.

The popular influence and political power wielded by this sect also deserve notice. They professed great attachment to each other, and much concern for the public welfare. "The Pharisees are friendly to one another, and are for the exercise of concord and regard for the public."—*Ibid.*, b. ii, ch. viii, sect. 14. The Pharisees "were able to make great opposition to kings : a cunning sect they were, and soon elevated to a pitch of open fighting and doing mischief."—*Antiq.*, b. xvii, ch. ii, sect. 4. "They artfully insinuated themselves into her (Queen Alexandra's) favor by little and little, and became the real administrators of public affairs ; they banished and restored whom they pleased ; they bound and loosed at their

pleasure; they had the enjoyment of the royal authority, whilst the expenses and the difficulties of it belonged to Alexandra. She was a sagacious woman in the management of great affairs, and became not only very powerful at home, but terrible also to foreign potentates: while she governed other people, the Pharisees governed her. She was so superstitious as to comply with their desires; and accordingly they slew whom they pleased."—*Wars*, b. i, ch. v, sect. 2, 3. In these respects, also, the Scriptures agree with the historian. The evangelists describe them as exhibiting themselves to the people as self-denying, holy, and zealous men, in order to gain their favor, (Matt. ix, 11; xxiii, 5, 15, 29; Luke v, 30;) yet, notwithstanding this, their lives were impure, (Matt. v, 20; xv, 4–8; xxiii, 27;) while their political guile and tact are seen in the quiet, cool, and determined manner in which they prosecuted their infamous designs against the Saviour; and at the same time their power is evinced in the moral coercion under which Pilate cowered, whilst he decreed the doom which his judgment and conscience forbade.

This was the character of the Pharisees: a compact, united, ambitious political party; an intolerant, hypocritical, and zealous religious sect. The peculiar position of Judea, in the conjunction of religion and government in the same code of law, and frequently by the same administration, made this union not only possible, but more perfect than it could have been in any other country.

The intelligent reader will have perceived that, notwithstanding all the professions of sanctity and zeal for the law which the Pharisees put forth, their union, object, and aim, as a sect, was a continued hostility against the purposes of God. The law had been given as a tutor to lead the world in general, and the Jewish nation in particular, to the school of Christ. Gal. iii, 24. The genius of the dispensation under which the Jewish people were now placed was development. A flood of light had been thrown upon the words and institutions of Moses by the prophets; God's providence had broken down old associations, and, by means of the captivity, compelled an earnest study of revelation, and careful scrutiny into the promised purposes of grace.

Under these circumstances, at this time, the Pharisees arose; and having, by a thousand arts, won popular favor, and in successive struggles secured political power, they armed themselves with real or pretended traditional expositions of the law. But whether true or false, they were *ancient*: they were therefore destitute of that glorious light which had been subsequently revealed. Yet, armed with these clouds of darkness, the Pharisees threw themselves into deadly conflict with religious progress; and, in defiance of ad-

vancing light, even when the Sun of righteousness himself arose, and shed the glory of his beams over the elected nation, this besotted and determined sect still adhered to their shadowy faith, still struggled to uphold a religion of externalism, still dared to maintain the complete and sufficient efficacy of rites. Pharisaism, therefore, while ultra-conservatism in politics, was in religion a curious masterpiece of Satanic art: by a professed adherence to the letter of the law, it raised an invincible obstruction to the dawning of gospel light, to the evolution of gospel power.

The SADDUCEES next claim our notice. An able writer on this subject observes: "The peculiar doctrines and practices of the Pharisees naturally begot the Sadducean system. The first embodied the principle of veneration, which looked on the past with so much regard as to become enamored of its forms as well as its substance, its ivy as well as its columns, its corruptions no less than its excellence, taking and maintaining the whole with a warm but blind and indiscriminate affection: the second, alienated by the extravagances of the former, were led to seize on the principle of rationalism, and hence to investigate prevalent customs, and weigh received opinions, till at length investigation begot skepticism, and skepticism issued in the positive rejection of many established notions and observances."—*Kitto's Cyclopædia*, vol. ii, p. 664.

The time when the Sadducees first appeared as a sect has not been ascertained. From what has been said, it is highly probable that they arose soon after the Pharisees. The rabbins attribute the origin of the Sadducees to one Sadoc, a scholar of Antigonus Sochæus, who was president of the sanhedrim, about two hundred and sixty years before Christ; and who, having taught his scholars that they ought to serve God out of pure love to him, and not in a servile manner, either for fear of punishment or hope of reward, Sadoc, not understanding this spiritual doctrine, concluded there was no future state of rewards and punishments, and accordingly propagated that error after his master's death.

It is, however, very doubtful whether reliance can be placed on this rabbinical tale. It is not probable that the Sadducees at first entertained any such distinct opinions respecting the future state, as this attributes to them. (See *Appendix*, note 116.) When John Hyrcanus, who was a Pharisee, abandoned that sect, and joined himself to the Sadducees, the only point of difference between the rival parties of which we are informed is, "that the Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances by succession from their fathers, which are not written in the law of Moses;" while the Sadducees "reject them, and say that we are to esteem

those observances to be obligatory which are in the written word, but are not to observe what are derived from the tradition of our forefathers."—*Josephus, Antiq.*, b. xiii, ch. x, sect. 6.

Inquiries into the prominent tenets of this sect meet with a brief reply from the pages of Josephus, and from Scripture. It seems, however, certain, that they denied the resurrection of the dead, the being of angels, and all existences of spirit, or of the souls of men departed. In proof of this, Josephus says: "The doctrine of the Sadducees is this: That souls die with the bodies."—*Antiq.*, b. xviii, ch. i, sect. 3. Also, "The Sadducees which say that there is no resurrection." Matt. xxii, 23. And again: "The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit." Acts xxiii, 8.

As has been already observed, another tenet of this sect was, the rejection of all traditional law; but whether, as is generally alleged, they accompanied this by a rejection of all the written word excepting the five books of Moses, is not so easily determined. Josephus, who was a Pharisee, and not indisposed to depreciate the rival sect, gives no countenance to their disbelief of the prophetic writings, but, on the contrary, when he speaks of their rejecting tradition, he says they received τὰ γεγραμμένα, "the written books:" an expression, as Dr. Jennings remarks, "too general and too much in their favor to have flowed from his pen, if he could with any plausibility have accused them of rejecting any one of them."—*Jewish Antiq.*, p. 316. The probability, therefore, is, that the Sadducees did not professedly reject the prophecies, but regarded the writings of Moses as of higher authority. This would account for our Saviour's having confuted them out of the Pentateuch, even although more explicit and more decisive passages abound in other parts of the Old-Testament Scriptures.

The Sadducees are further said to have stood directly opposed to the Pharisees on the subject of fate, as they denied all manner of predestination whatever, their doctrine being, that "God had made man absolute master of all his actions, with a full freedom to do either good or evil, as he shall think fit to choose, without any assistance to him for the one, or any restraint upon him as to the other; so that, whether a man doeth good or evil, it is wholly from himself, because he hath it absolutely in his own power, both to do the one and avoid the other."—*Prideaux's Connection*, vol. ii, p. 317. This alleged rejection of the doctrines of grace and spiritual influence is perfectly consistent with the Sadducean philosophy; and there is therefore little doubt that this statement is correct.

As, therefore, the Pharisees made *submission to authority* the

ruling idea of their system, so the Sadducees adopted *free and unfettered inquiry* for theirs. If each had proceeded under the influence of an implicit deference to revealed truth, and a steady adherence to spiritual religion, each would have acted as a salutary check upon the other, and the interests of the Church would have been preserved from serious injury, notwithstanding these differences of opinion. But, unfortunately for the cause of truth, neither party did this. The Pharisees neutralized the Scriptures, and made them of "none effect by their traditions:" the standard of authority which they erected was not, therefore, "the word of God," but "the commandments of men." Matt. xv, 6; Mark vii, 7, 8. Erring in this vital point, they forgot the spirituality of religion, and, trusting in the efficacy of rites, became, notwithstanding their professions of sanctity, but "whited walls and painted sepulchres." The Sadducees fared no better. They, too, abandoned to a great extent Scriptural authority and practical religion, and, committing their faith to the charge of a proud and daring reason, they were hurried through all the phases of skepticism, until, as far as the practice of piety is concerned, they terminated their wanderings in positive infidelity. And so in every age, and among every people, have similar results followed similar conduct.

The Sadducees are said to have been the most wealthy sect; but their doctrines never obtained among the common people. Their learning and riches, notwithstanding the paucity of their numbers, gave them great influence.

The ESSENES (see *Appendix*, note 117) were another Jewish sect: they appear originally to have sprung from the Pharisees, by professing to reform their doctrines and institutions. With respect to the former, they believed in an absolute predestination, and in the immortality of the soul; they observed the seventh day with great strictness, and held the Scriptures in the highest reverence, but considered them as mystic writings, and expounded them allegorically. But they were most remarkable in their practices and institutions. They were ascetics. The ordinary pleasures of life they avoided as something morally bad, and held self-control and freedom from the slavery of the passions to be virtue. Marriage they despised: selecting among the children of others those whom they considered the most promising, they endeavored to form them according to their own model. In this conduct they appear to have been influenced, not so much by any absolute disapproval of a wedded life and its natural fruits, as by fears and cautions, which the immoral character of their age may in some degree have justified. Riches, too, they held in contempt. Whatever they had, they were ready to share

with others. Superfluity was unknown in a community where all things were held in common. As soon as a new-comer was received among them, he put his property, whatever it was, into the common stock; or, if he had little or nothing, his wants were thence gratuitously supplied. Neither riches nor poverty, therefore, were known in their body. Stewards were appointed by them, whose business it was to take due care of what in each case was intrusted to them, not for their own individual advantage, but for the common good.

They held all employments unlawful except agriculture. Buying and selling was unknown among them. They rose early, and spent the first portion of the day at their prayers; they then proceeded, under their respective foremen, to their several employments, at which they labored till eleven o'clock, when, after washing and certain religious solemnities, they sat down to eat. A priest having invoked the Divine blessing, each had a small loaf and a plate of one sort of food; after which the priest gave thanks, and they all returned to their several employments until the evening, when they had another meal in the same manner.

They appear, from the account of Pliny, to have located at first about the banks of the Dead Sea; but as they increased in numbers, they were found in other districts, and sometimes in cities. In the days of Philo they were spread even to Egypt, where he gives an account of them very similar to that of Josephus.

This sect was not, however, at any time very numerous, and is never referred to by Jesus Christ or his apostles. Dr. Neander supposes that they were distinguished from the other Jews by this,—that they knew and loved something higher than the outward ceremonial of a dead faith; that they did really strive after holiness of heart, and inward communion with God. However this may have been, the existence and manners of this sect deserve attention, inasmuch as they were evidently the model upon which all Christian asceticism and monkery were afterward formed.

One other inquiry will conclude this chapter: it refers to the views which the Jews of this period entertained respecting the nature and application of the great practical doctrines of religion; such as repentance, the atonement, pardon, faith, and personal salvation; and the consequent religious state of the people. In prosecuting this subject, it will be necessary to refer to several particulars.

No doubt can be entertained that the Jews at the captivity received as a doctrine of religion the duty of personal repentance for sin. They did not regard the sacrificial services of the law as availing for them, while they continued in a state of open transgression: the uniform teaching of prophetic Scriptures rendered such

an error impossible. Hence we find frequent reference to this in the apocryphal books: "He that feareth the Lord will repent from his heart." Ecclus. xxi, 6. "As yet place of repentance was open unto them." 2 Esdras ix, 11. "Thou gavest them place of repentance." Wisdom xii, 10. These passages show that the idea, that the heart was to feel humbled and contrite under a sense of the guilt of sin, and to desire most earnestly deliverance from it, prevailed during the time that these writings were composed. And this opinion continued; for Philo specially refers to repentance and its results: "To repent affords remission of sins."—*De Congressu*, &c., vol. i, p. 534, l. 43. "Humility produces propitiation."—*De Leg. Alleg.*, vol. i, p. 121, l. 35.* All this is fully confirmed by the conduct of John the Baptist. He neither professed to reveal, nor by labored argumentation to revive and sustain, the doctrine of repentance; but, referring to this as a universally admitted tenet, he enforces the practice; and the nation proved the accuracy of his assumption by responding to his call.

The Scriptures which these Jews had received from their fathers also taught the doctrine of a pardon for sin through an atonement. This was the spirit and genius of the Mosaic law, and was amply confirmed and extended by the prophets. It was also fully recognized by the Jews of this period. The author of the Book of Esdras declares that "he pardoneth," and that "if he should not forgive them that are cured with his word, and put out the multitude of contentions, there should be very few left." 2 Esdras vii, 68–70. In Ecclesiasticus God is declared "mighty to forgive." Chap. xvi, 11. Again: "Forgive thy neighbor the hurt that he hath done unto thee, so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest. One man beareth hatred against another: and doth he seek pardon from the Lord? He sheweth no mercy to a man which is like himself: and doth he ask forgiveness of his own sins?" Chap. xxviii, 2–4. It is freely admitted that these passages not only make no reference to the great promised atonement, but that several of them refer to secondary means as a ground of hope: yet the important fact is clear, that the forgiveness of sins was hoped for, and prayed for to God. Philo, although by no means clear as to the nature of the requisite atonement, seems very fully to apprehend its necessity. "What man is there of true judgment, who, when he sees the deeds of most men, is not ready to call aloud to the great Saviour-God, that he would be pleased to take off this load of sin, and, by appointing a price and ransom for the soul, restore it to its original liberty?"—*De Confus.*

* However defective in Scriptural accuracy the doctrine of this latter quotation may be, it shows yet more strongly the importance attached to repentance.

Ling., vol. i, p. 148, l. 47. And when the Jews in the days of Christ asked, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark ii, 7,) they did not object to the doctrine of forgiveness, nor to a clear communication of this fact being made to the pardoned sinner: their objection was entirely confined to the assumption of this power by any but God himself.

The necessity of faith in God, and the consequent attainment of salvation, which consisted of the enjoyment of spiritual blessings here, and of supreme happiness hereafter, were also taught in the Old-Testament Scriptures. The Book of Psalms is full of descriptions of this faith and grace; they run as threads of gold through the entire texture of sacred prophecy, and stand out prominently in the finest characters found among the Jewish people. They must, therefore, have been recognized as important elements of national theology.

The apocryphal books do not afford much information as to personal religion; but there are, nevertheless, expressions which bear upon this branch of the subject. In speaking of the deliverance of the three Hebrews from the burning fiery furnace, the language used is, that they "by believing were saved out of the flame." 1 Macc. ii, 59. These words precisely agree with the sentiment of the apostle, who, alluding to the same persons, says that they, "through faith, quenched the violence of fire." Heb. xi, 33, 34. The Book of Ecclesiasticus contains some earnest exhortations to a holy life, interspersed with allusions to the character of the blessings enjoyed by the pious: "Believe in him, and he will help thee; order thy way aright, and trust in him. Ye that fear the Lord, wait for his mercy, and go not aside, lest ye fall. Ye that fear the Lord, believe him, and your reward shall not fail. Ye that fear the Lord, hope for good, and for everlasting joy and mercy. Look at the generations of old, and see: did ever any trust in the Lord, and was confounded? Or did any abide in his fear, and was forsaken? Or whom did he ever despise, that called upon him? For the Lord is full of compassion and mercy, long-suffering, and very pitiful, and forgiveth sins, and saveth in time of affliction." Ecclus. ii, 6-11. Those who wrote in this manner, and they who pondered over these words for their instruction, could have had no mean idea of the joyful confidence, the assured peace, the forgiving mercy, which the people of God were privileged to experience.

The opinions held on these points at the close of this period may be gathered from Philo, who speaks with great clearness. On the necessity of Divine influence, he observes, "It is our duty to trust to God to cleanse and beautify our frame, and not to think that we

are of ourselves capable, without his heavenly grace, to purge and wash away the spots with which our nature abounds."—*De Somniis*, vol. i, p. 662, l. 37. The necessity of faith, and its important results, are thus spoken of: "That man is only worthy of acceptance who places his hope in God, as the Author of his being, and as the only one who is able to keep him free from sin and corruption."—*De Præmiis*, &c., vol. ii, p. 410, l. 24. "Faith in God, the most noble of all virtues."—*De Abrahamo*, vol. ii, p. 39, l. 18. Further: "The only sure and well-founded blessing, to which we can trust, is faith in God. It is the comfort of life, and comprehends every salutary hope. It is the diminution of evil, and productive of all good, the ruin of demoniacal influence, and the promoter of true godliness. It affords a title to happiness, and is the improvement of the human soul; when the soul reposes itself and confides in the great Author of its being; who can do all things, but wills only and determines what is best."—*Ibid.*, p. 38, l. 49, &c. "After repentance, the third conflict is to maintain righteousness." "After faith comes repentance and improvement; in consequence of which, we read of persons who from a bad life are converted to a better." Again: "If, then, they have from their very souls a just contrition, and are changed, and have humbled themselves of their past errors, acknowledging and confessing their sins, having their conscience purified first in sincerity and truth, to the Power who knows those sins, and afterward by confession to those who may thereby be edified; such persons shall find pardon from the Saviour and merciful God, and receive a most choice and great advantage, of being made like the Logos of God; who was originally the great archetype, after which the soul of man was formed."—*De Execrationibus*, vol. ii, p. 435, l. 29.

From these extracts it will be seen that, notwithstanding all the conflicting influences to which the Hebrew nation had been exposed, a rich amount of sterling theology was preserved amongst them, even unto the time of the Messiah. The great elements of truth, which form the very soul of practical godliness, and which are the richest gifts in the wide range of revelation, are all found here. The purity of the primitive nature of man is here admitted. His present fallen, polluted, and helpless state is asserted to be such that nothing but grace can meliorate his condition. The necessity of sincere repentance, and of faith in God, is maintained, as lying at the foundation of all practical piety. The happy results of these, in the amendment of the life, the washing away of sin, the attainment of pardon, are held forth; and, ultimately, a hope is exhibited of a restoration to the likeness of the Logos of God, after the image of whom the mind of man was originally formed.

What was wanted here but the clear exhibition of new-covenant blessings? These bring out the substantial truth of the old economy. Now, therefore, if a sufficient atonement for sin is revealed, and a plenary measure of the Holy Spirit is given, and light is cast upon the future and final destiny of man, the whole scheme of redemption stands before us.

The gracious providence of God had, then, so watched over his ancient people, that, notwithstanding all their unfaithfulness and rebellion, his truth had been maintained, and its great practical elements preserved. And hence it was that, when the Messiah came, he had not to reprehend a departure from sound doctrine, and to propound anew the elements of theologic truth. On the contrary, he found all these fixed in the public mind. Orthodoxy was general. When he spoke of penitence, faith, and pardon, of prayer and salvation, he was readily understood; no one wished the terms explained, none were ignorant of the things intended. The great question then presents itself, Why were not Christ and his doctrine received? If Jewish theology was so correct and complete, as to require only, and that in a special manner, the revelations of the Gospel to impart to it perfection and living power, why were these revelations rejected, and their Author persecuted and slain? The answer is, Because the Jewish religion was not in fact what it appeared in theory; because, with a correct creed, they had almost universally fallen into a corrupt practice. To show the cause and completeness of this perversion, will close the subject.

In the preceding statement, and in the following remarks, the Sadducees have been left out of the account. In the pride of intellect, they had wandered from the truth; and, as a uniform and inevitable result, they "knew not the Scriptures, nor the power of God." But learned and wealthy as this party was, and capable, on great emergencies, of exercising considerable public power, it had not influence with the people. These men did not give a tone to the sentiment and feeling of the country; they were not regarded as models of religious life. This most responsible position was occupied by their rivals, the Pharisees; who were looked up to by the nation as the teachers of the truth. They were regarded as the sound expositors of the law; and their manner of life was considered the finest and fullest exhibition of the national religion. What, then, was the conduct of these men in this most important station? On this question hinged not only the religion, but the national destiny, of the Jewish people. How did the Pharisees acquit themselves? They were unfaithful. Retaining the truth, they destroyed its power; preserving and exhibiting theological orthodoxy, they

exulted only in a lifeless form, in a dead faith. Hear the words of the Saviour, as of Him who spake as man never spake: in all his mild but mighty majesty, he threw the fearful charge upon their conscience: "Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Matt. xv, 6. What words are these! They had not destroyed or prohibited the word; manuscripts had not been burned, and God's revelation proscribed. They had not professed to reject the word, or to oppose its meaning; to cavil against its authority, or to argue in opposition to its requirements. No; but, admitting all its truth, and subscribing to all its teaching, they destroyed its effect.

God had given this word as a light unto the world; he had cast it as a great element of life into this dead mass. It was divinely adapted to vivify and enlighten mankind: yet here we see it, taken, handled, admired, caressed, and even exhibited to man; but neutralized and powerless. How was this done? By what means was such an unlooked-for result brought about? By *tradition*. (See *Appendix*, note 118.) The musty fragments of antiquity, the wildest conceits and most foolish vagaries of the human mind, had been gathered together to explain, (no, that is not the correct term,) to give a meaning, to this word: the Divine revelation is overlaid with human wisdom; the gift of Heaven is lost in earthly explications; the word of God is, in effect, destroyed by the pretended and obtruded explanations of men: it is made of none effect. And thus, while the Pharisees were zealous for the law, trusted in its ordinances, would die in support of the Mosaic faith, they at the same time fearfully departed from the purpose of God; so that, while holding his revealed truth before their country and the world, in all its apparent integrity, they only gave the outline, the image, as cold as marble, as powerless as death.

We have this case at full length painted to the life by our Saviour himself, in the beautiful parable of the Pharisee and publican. Luke xviii, 9-14. These men went up into the temple to pray: the latter, the subject of deep feeling, laboring under intense emotion, his heart broken under a sense of sin, striving to repent, so humbled that his heavy eye cannot rise to heaven. In this agony of soul he smites his breast, and groans forth, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" His heart rests upon an atonement, his hope fixes on mercy. His faith is engaged with God. Heaven saw, and heard; and the publican, degraded as he was in the eyes of man, went to his house in the favor of God. Here is a vivid picture of what Old-Testament religion was intended to be. The law and the prophets, fairly read, fully acted upon, would have led men to the house of Jehovah under this

deep sense of the evil of sin, would have guided their hearts to the throne of grace, would have given them mercy. This was the way which David and other Old-Testament saints trod. This was what God intended the revelations of his truth to produce in the Jewish mind; and the prospect is glorious: here is guilty man blessed and saved by the mercy of God.

But there is another figure in this picture. He stands erect. He displays no emotion, or, if he does, it is that of a haughty thankfulness that he is so unlike his praying companion. For himself he forgets to pray; his time is fully occupied in recounting what he regards as his good deeds. He fasts, he prays, he gives tithe, he is saved from outward and abominable vice; and in this he trusted. In his whole character there is not one single element of conformity to Divine truth. There is no humiliation, no confession, no reliance on atonement, no looking for mercy; in a word, no recognition of God's manner of saving men; but, on the contrary, the perverse mind, towering in all his pride, dares affront God with the aspirations of his vanity, the ebullitions of his conceit. He went down to his house admired by an applauding crowd; but the favor of Heaven rested not upon his head, no realized mercy gladdened his heart; full of self and sin, he remained the same.

Yet this man was the *beau ideal* of Jewish religion in the day of Christ. He was a model specimen of piety, he was orthodox, he held the truth; but he shows how fearfully it had been made of none effect: while, on the other hand, if real religion existed at all, it was found in a publican. And when thus seen, in the estimation of the Jews at that time, this sterling spiritual religion was regarded as a despised and contemptible thing, even as a publican.

Need we wonder, then, at the persecution of Christ, and the rejection of his gospel? These, and all the fearful ruin which soon after fell upon the Jewish people, were the necessary and natural results of that unfaithfulness which has been described; of that fatal abandonment of spiritual religion which has been shown to have prevailed.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GENIUS OF THE DISPENSATION.

THE Mosaic Economy a new Dispensation, which exhibits, I. A UNIQUE DEVELOPMENT OF DIVINE GOVERNMENT—The Election of a Family to distinguished civil and religious Privileges—The continued Application of Divine Interposition, adapted to their varying Circumstances—And the providential Arrangements of the World made with Reference to their Interest and Destiny. **II. A REMEDIAL AGENCY,** which afforded an Authentication of revealed Truth—Removed dangerous Error—Perpetuated the Divine Will in written Oracles—Gave typical Illustrations of the Messiah's Kingdom—And dispensed the Light and Influence of Prophecy. **III. A MEANS OF EFFECTUATING THE PROMISED REDEMPTION—**It supplied all the essential Elements of Knowledge necessary to identify the Messiah at his Coming, and to exhibit the true Character of his Mission—And maintained and illustrated the Doctrine of Atonement—Yet it did not produce the intended Results to the Hebrews—But was, nevertheless, in their Excision, made an efficient Means of accomplishing the great Work of Redemption.

THE dealings of God with the Hebrew people constitute a new chapter in the Divine administration. Man had previously heard much of the wonderful operations of the Almighty; had seen manifold proofs of his greatness, goodness, justice, and mercy. The world had witnessed much Divine interposition: when universal wickedness prevailed, the deluge asserted the power and justice of God; and the preservation of the house of Noah attested his goodness and mercy. When the people rebelliously determined to remain one undivided community, the confusion of tongues enforced the Divine will, and scattered them over the face of the earth. When the inhabitants of a particular district had sinned beyond the hope of repentance, they were destroyed by fire from heaven, and righteous Lot was saved from this fearful ruin. The government of God had been maintained from the beginning, and revealed truth and spiritual influence had been imparted, suitable to the circumstances of mankind, and calculated to meet the wants of his exalted, but fallen nature, and to lead him to a glorious destiny. But in all the Divine administration of this period, every branch of the human family held the same relation to God: subject to the same law, favored with the same privilege; obedience to Divine truth secured favor, and transgression met deserved punishment.

In the vocation of Abraham, and the election of the seed of Israel, we behold the introduction of a new economy, which, in its operation, exhibited a unique development of Divine government, an important range of remedial agency adapted to the recovery and elevation of human nature, and an essential means of effectuating the great purposes of redemption. A brief review of these particulars will form

an appropriate conclusion to our investigation of the history and religion of the Hebrew people, and show, under different aspects, the genius of their dispensation.

I. We regard the history and religion of the Hebrews as presenting a unique development of Divine government.

The distinguishing feature of this new economy is the election of one individual and his descendants, from generation to generation, to stand in a special covenant relation to Jehovah. By virtue of this election, this family was expanded into a nation, which, under the immediate protection of God, rose to distinguished power and glory, was preserved for centuries amid a thousand dangers, and, although punished by Heaven for their sin, and led into captivity among the Heathen, is seen to have been sustained, restored, preserved, and delivered, until the great purposes of grace were carried into effect.

In this heavenly policy we see a remarkable adaptation of the ways of God to the circumstances of man. Natural generation becomes a title to elevated temporal advancement, and distinguished religious privilege. All the family relationship of mankind is incorporated into the Divine plan, and every peculiarity of humanity is thus invested with importance, and rendered subsidiary to the Divine purpose. Not only was this the case in a national and general manner; it extended through all the ramifications of the system. The sins of the fathers were visited upon the children; mercy, special in its power and blessing, was imparted to the seed of the righteous; and through successive ages the lineal descent of Him who was to be born the world's Redeemer was clearly pointed out by the finger of prophecy. But while this system thus laid hold of human relationship, and made it the appointed means of covenant blessing, it was limited in its range, and confined to the seed of Jacob. The Divine government of the world was thus presented to human observation under a new aspect: here is the whole family of mankind amenable to Divine law, partaking of the Divine goodness, subjects of Divine government; and yet, within this general display of the sovereignty of God, we see a small portion of earth upon which the power and grace of Heaven are shed in such glorious measure, that it is lighted up with resplendent beauty, amid the otherwise unvarying dimness of universal twilight. Here men live and move, the subjects of Divine knowledge, and spiritual influence, to which the wide world of humanity beside was a stranger. The prospect is unique. Nor was this strange distinction created by the fidelity of the favored people, or the wickedness of the others; it arose immediately out of an act of Divine sovereignty. Rom. ix, 11-16. It pleased God thus to take

a people out of the common level of human privilege, and to raise them into an intimate covenant union with himself.

But the introduction of a part of mankind into this peculiar relation, and the limitation of its benefits to the seed of Jacob, not only exhibit a remarkable exception to the ordinary operations of Divine government; the nature and extent of the blessings thus imparted are equally striking. These pertained, in the first instance, to temporal elevation and happiness. A special part of the sacred charter guaranteed to this people the abiding presence of Jehovah with them as their King, and the consequent exercise of all the infinite attributes of Deity on their behalf. It should not be forgotten, that this revelation of God did not remove or supersede any of the privileges which Israel enjoyed in common with the rest of mankind. All that man had learned of providence, all that he had been taught of confidence in God, the elect people still retained in common with others; but, beyond all this, they had God brought very nigh unto them. He multiplied their numbers, increased their wealth, confounded their enemies, taught them wisdom. In their national councils they had access to Infinite Prescience; over the national weal the ægis of Almighty Power was securely held; the "eternal God" was their refuge. Nor was this glorious extent of blessing lost in its national generality. It followed them in all the requirements of mind and body: every family and personal want was embraced within the range of the covenant, and the resources of Heaven thus brought within the reach of Israel. The result of all these blessings was, to make this place the garden of the Lord. Every element of national greatness, all the means of producing public wealth, every source of individual and general happiness, were here fostered by heavenly influence; covenant privilege gave unearthly life and energy to all. Skepticism may wrangle and blaspheme, and the carnal philosopher may close his eyes to the light of truth, and steel his heart against the weight of evidence; but imperishable monuments yet remain of the validity of God's ancient covenant.

But as the Divine government never contemplates man as entirely limited to earth, but always recognizes the spiritual nature and immortal destiny of his soul, so this covenant, although it shed religious light and hope over the wide range of temporal want and blessing, did more; it revealed Jehovah as their God. Here, as in the former case, all the truth that had been previously revealed was retained. All that had contributed to form the piety of Abel, the holy life of Enoch, the righteousness of Noah, the faith of Abraham, was included in the religion of the Hebrews. But while Moses recognized and re-asserted all this, he was made the instrument of communi-

cating an immense amount of additional information. It is, however, a memorable fact, and one which bears important evidence of the existence of a rich amount of revealed truth during the patriarchal age, that the Mosaic laws were most distinguished for the impressive manner in which they were communicated, and the Divine authentication thereby afforded, not only to new revelations, but equally so to those which had been previously known. However startling the statement may appear, it is nevertheless true, that the terrible scenes of Sinai were designed more to authenticate than reveal truth. When, therefore, we regard these events as a part of the Divine administration, we are inevitably led to the conclusion that the delinquencies of the preceding age did not arise from the absence of religious light, but rather from unbelief and neglect. It pleased God, therefore, to make the religious revelations of this new economy remarkable for the overwhelming weight of evidence, and the unquestionable Divine authority, by which they were invested. And how full of sublimity and glory were these manifestations of God ! Miracle surrounded the daily path of the people, and supplied their daily food ; supernatural appearances and powers were always visible in the camp. But, towering high in sublimity above all these, were the glorious displays of majesty which attested the Divine authority of the law. Even Moses feared : the granite masses of Sinai and Horeb trembled to their centre. Sacred song in after ages celebrated the unequalled effect of these Divine operations, and called them to mind as everlasting proofs of the heavenly origin of the Hebrew covenant. But this glorious attestation was given to living verities. Here God reigned, his law was promulged, and spread its claims not only over every part of external conduct, but reached every faculty of the mind, and every affection of the heart. Here God was worshiped in a manner which aptly symbolized all the great truths of redemption, and shed spiritual light upon the religious condition of man. Here God was known, his attributes declared, his true character exhibited, and all Israel incited to obtain, through obedience to the moral law, a conformity to the moral image of their Maker. Removed as we are from this people by great difference of language, manners, and age, we look back from a distance of thirty-four centuries upon this national election, and stand amazed at the actual operation of the glorious theocracy ; exhibiting, as it does, a peculiar manifestation of the Divine government, which, even now, is replete with wonder, as its true nature is understood, and unfolds new reasons for astonishment, as we pursue our researches into its spirit and character.

But in order to our having a complete view of the subject, we

must not consider this election and theocratic government as existing merely in the Divine intention, or even as carried into effect in any given period of Hebrew history. It is further necessary that we consider the numerous changes effected in this institution, in accommodation to the unfaithfulness and obstinacy of the people; and also the effects which it occasioned in the general government of the world. With respect to the first particular, the case is most astonishing, as exhibiting great displays of goodness, long-suffering, and mercy, in combination with infinite wisdom and power. No sooner had the purpose of God been fully brought into operation by the completion of the covenant, than the unbelief of Israel protracted the sojourn in the wilderness from a year and a half to forty years. When the supineness of the people prevented their taking perfect possession of the promised land, their limited occupation of it was divinely defended. As their religious unfaithfulness rendered them liable to repeated aggressions, God raised up extraordinary deliverers to judge and save them. When it had become fully apparent that, notwithstanding a rich amount of Divine influence, applied under the most favorable circumstances, their unfaithfulness was such that the power of their religion was insufficient to maintain their national unity, they were allowed to establish a monarchy. The sovereign having used all his influence and power to promote licentiousness of manners, and the introduction of idolatry, the nation was divided by Divine appointment into two independent kingdoms. At length, when these and other causes had consummated the iniquity of Israel, they were successively destroyed, and carried into captivity. Yet, in the midst of national ruin, the identity of the Hebrew people was maintained, and a remnant restored and preserved, until, having completed their sin by their constant and obstinate rejection of the Messiah, the covenant was annulled, and the Hebrews driven from the land of their fathers. But in all this conflict between carnal unbelief on the one hand, and Divine interposition on the other, it is evident, that, from the first, the government which was intended to be a pure theocracy became more and more worldly in its character. Every change in polity, the various and successive alternations in administration, were so many aggressions upon the immediate and direct government of God, by the unfaithfulness of his elect. Thus we see the glorious theocracy invaded and corrupted, while the people who were destined to have Jchovah for their King, and all their national interests sustained and surrounded by his glorious and infinite attributes, are found gradually descending to the ordinary level of a minor state, relying for direction and defense only upon human wisdom and valor; until, under the

malediction of Heaven, they were deprived of national existence, and scattered over the face of the earth as homeless outcasts.

Another important subject is presented to our consideration, in the effects which were produced upon the general government of the world by the national election of the Hebrews. It is impossible that a people could be made to enjoy such special and elevated privileges without creating a necessity for some peculiar manifestations to the surrounding nations of the actual existence and resistless operations of the Divine government. Intimations of this abound in Holy Scripture. When the several branches of the postdiluvian population were, by the confusion of tongues, dispersed abroad over the earth, their location was appointed, and the bounds of their respective territories fixed, with special reference to the future inheritance of Israel. Deut. xxxii, 8. The situation of the elect nation was a first principle in the whole of this providential arrangement. And throughout their future history Egypt and Syria, Ethiopia and Babylon, Assyria and Edom, and other surrounding kingdoms, were elevated or depressed, were crowned with victory or covered with defeat, generally according to their bearing toward Israel, or the peculiar circumstances and condition of the chosen nation. More than this, the secret of the Lord was with his people. Some intimation of the plagues of Egypt was revealed to Abraham. The requiem of Nineveh was sung by Hebrew bards, while she was mistress of Asia. The doom of Babylon was asserted by the sacred seer before the name of Nebuchadnezzar was known among men. The warlike exploits of Cyrus and the martial career of Alexander were not only known to Hebrew prophets, but their principal actions graphically described ages before these men were born. The universal ascendancy of Rome was published to Israel during the captivity. These are not merely mentioned as interesting facts; as such they deserve very serious attention; but reference is now made to them as proofs that Israel was the centre-point of God's providential government of the world, the key-stone in the great arch of ancient nations. How gloriously does this exhibit the Divine character! How infinite in perfections must HE be, who could so exactly adjust the political mechanism of the world, that while governing all kingdoms in wisdom, truth, and equity, He could make the most prominent events in the history of every nation subserve the interests of his own peculiar people! Men may scoff at Jewish superstition, and magnify the refinement of Athens, the valor of Sparta, the splendor of Rome; but he knows nothing either of God or of the history of his race, who does not carefully study the Divine administration of the world, in special relation to the Hebrew nation

II. It is further proposed to regard the Mosaic dispensation as one important range of remedial agency adapted to the recovery and elevation of human nature.

Whatever other important purposes this religious economy might have been intended to subserve, it was certainly meant to raise the elect people, not only to political greatness as a nation, but to moral and religious eminence as individuals. It was unquestionably adapted to promote this result, as will appear from a few brief observations.

The Mosaic economy afforded *a clear and explicit authentication to Divine truth*. In patriarchal times, the great doctrines of religion were handed down traditionally, by *vivâ voce* communications; and it is notorious that, at the time of the exodus, the most important elements of primitive faith had either faded away from the minds of men, or had been greatly corrupted by human speculations: both these circumstances rendered an authoritative authentication of truth of the greatest importance to the religious interests of mankind. This the Hebrew dispensation abundantly supplied. The revelations of Divine truth to the Hebrews were directly attested by every kind of evidence which the nature of the case admitted, and that to the utmost possible extent. An infinite range of miracle and prophecy pervaded the whole system, and stamped on it imperishable evidence of its Divine validity. The Hebrews knew, therefore, throughout their whole history, that the oracles which they had received were "of God."

But this divinely authenticated truth not only exhibited a pure faith to the Hebrew mind; it also swept away an immense accumulation of error. Doubts had arisen almost everywhere as to the doctrine of the Divine unity, and polytheism generally prevailed. The foundation of all sound morals had been sapped, and many of the foulest crimes were commonly perpetrated under the sanction of religion. Worship had been so fatally perverted, that it had generally sunk into folly or sin. While the world lay in these circumstances, the light of revelation was shed upon the Hebrew people: God revealed himself unto them as "One Lord:" His unity and glorious perfections were fully declared. The mists of error were removed from the science of morals, and a pure code of law communicated immediately from Jehovah. Worship was rescued from impurity and unmeaning superstition, and made a way of access unto God. In every aspect, the faith of the Hebrew is seen purged from the numerous evils which the energy of the spirit of error had introduced among mankind, and imbued with pure and perfect truth from the fountain-head.

Another important element of the Mosaic economy was the communication of Divine revelation in a written form. Truth had been previously revealed, but had been fearfully corrupted in the course of its transmission: now the will of God is placed in permanent characters before the mind of man. It does not pass to any person through the memory and language of another; it stands in no danger of being alloyed by human infirmity of judgment, or exuberance of imagination. This gem of heavenly verity, insoluble in earthly error, remained, throughout successive ages, an unfailing witness for God, a clear and constant testimony for the truth. It might be neglected or undervalued; yet it remained an undying exhibition of the mind of the eternal Jehovah. We need not wonder that the inspired apostle should regard the possession of the sacred oracles as the principal glory of the elect people. Rom. iii, 2.

We place in the same category, and reckon among the remedial agencies which adapted this dispensation to the recovery and elevation of mankind, its *typical character*.

Much learned labor has been expended on the question, whether the Hebrews possessed any distinct perception of this peculiar significance of the sacred things and institutions of their economy; and an opinion has already been expressed upon the subject in its general aspect. There is, however, one preliminary inquiry, which has been either wholly overlooked or generally neglected; namely, By what means, or through what mental process, was this typical character discoverable, if it was or could be apprehended? A type has been defined "as something present, which is prepared and designed by God to adumbrate some future object."—*Horne's Introduction*. And it evidently appears, from comparing the history and economy of Moses with the whole of the New Testament, that the ritual law was typical of the Messiah and of gospel blessings. This point has been clearly established by the great apostle of the Gentiles, in his Epistle to the Hebrews. (*Horne's Introduction*.) Without the testimony of St. Paul, the comparison alluded to would be sufficient to convince any intelligent and candid mind of the typical character of the ritual law; but the comparison is necessary. An investigation into the law, apart from gospel communications, would not be sufficient to establish this point. How, then, could intellectual effort, or laboring criticism, make the discovery before the gospel was announced? Certainly, not at all. But does it follow from hence, that therefore this truth could not be known to the Old-Testament Jews? The conclusion is absurd. There are, at the present time, gospel verities which cannot be ascer-

tained by human reason. The whole range of experimental religion, all its hopes and fears, the blessedness of Divine Love, the blissful enjoyment of spiritual communion with God, are all a *terra incognita* to the carnal intellect of the most profound mind. And for this reason, intellectual research is not the appointed means of realizing these sublime privileges: it is the office of faith. Faith enabled the pious Hebrew to pass beyond the outward meaning of the ritual law, and, realizing the antitype in its figurative precursor, to enter into the design of God in the economy of redemption, and to experience the power of grace. Thus Abraham saw the day of Christ; and thus the faithful sons of Abraham apprehended a spiritual import in external symbols, and saw in ritual services a sublime and glorious compass of instruction and blessing, which the utmost researches of the carnal and unbelieving could never discover.

The communications of the holy prophets afforded the Hebrews a further means of religious improvement. These inspired teachers were not merely accredited to kings, and instructed to reveal important information touching the destinies of kingdoms, or to utter predictions respecting future events; their more ordinary duty was to unfold religious truth, and to guide the people to a sincere and spiritual obedience to the law. This was the chief aim in their frequent exhibitions of the Messiah; whose certain appearance was distinctly declared, his Divine nature plainly asserted, and his sufferings and death explicitly described. In connection with these revelations, the prophets gave the most glowing descriptions of the spiritual glories of the last days, when idolatry should be destroyed, and a reign of righteousness, fraught with every blessing, and imbued with heavenly power, through the manifestations of the Spirit of God, should be established over the earth. At the same time, these inspired teachers showed the fearful consequences of sin, and urged the people to repentance and amendment of life; denounced a heartless, formal attendance upon the sanctuary, and labored to lead the people into a serious, spiritual worship of God, and obedience to his will. The prophetic institute was, therefore, exactly adapted to meet the case of the Hebrews. It united, like the twilight of morning, the shadowy gloom of rites and ceremonies to the sunlight of gospel glory. By this means the cold architecture of ecclesiastical arrangement became instinct with life; the dreary region of rites was converted into the garden of the Lord. Prophecy thus afforded immense aid to those who, living under the Old-Testament dispensation, were desirous of ascertaining their precise relation to God, and the nature and extent of the purposes of his mercy to them-

selves and all mankind. To every question rising in such minds, it afforded a prompt and satisfactory reply.

The dispensation of grace under which the Hebrew people were placed, in virtue of their covenant relation to Jehovah, was, therefore, designed and adapted to furnish them with important means of spiritual improvement. It afforded a perfect authentication of Divine truth, and removed a vast amount of serious and dangerous error; it gave a manifestation of Divine government calculated to enlarge the knowledge of men respecting the things of God, and specially adapted to inspire the Hebrews with a lively confidence in Jehovah; it imparted Divine truth in a permanent and intelligible form; it presented them an elaborate system of law, worship, and ritualistic economy, which at once shed a clear and steady light upon morals, and was adapted through faith to lead men to a spiritual knowledge of the Divine will; it gave, besides all this, the light of prophecy, as a means of leading them to just and spiritual views of personal religion. Let these high privileges and important means be fairly estimated, and it will be fully acknowledged that, whatever subsidiary or general purposes the Mosaic economy was intended to serve, it was calculated, in an eminent degree, to raise the moral and religious character of the Hebrews, and to prepare them for a rich experience of the Divine favor individually, and thus to make them as a nation eminently subserve the grand designs of Heaven.

III. The Hebrew history and religious dispensation may be also regarded as the means appointed, in the wisdom of God, for effecting the great purposes of redemption.

Prior to the vocation of Abraham, although much religious light and truth had been communicated to mankind, it is not known that any information respecting the incarnation of the Saviour, his personal appearance, or meritorious work, had been given, beyond what was obscurely hinted in the primitive promise, which declared that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Yet, when the Messiah appeared, there was among all nations a general expectation of his coming, and he was identified as the promised Christ by numerous and unmistakable proofs. He was born both when and where the Messiah was predicted to appear. His mother was a virgin of the house of David, as had been explicitly declared concerning the Saviour. He possessed a perfect human nature, and, at the same time, claimed to be Divine: which remarkable union of nature in the Messiah had been predicted to the Hebrews. John the Baptist preceded Jesus, and announced him: this was foretold,—one in the spirit and power of Elias was to prepare the way of the promised Lord. The Saviour was distinguished throughout his whole public

life by a continued series of miracles, all of which were intended to alleviate human sorrow, and promote the happiness of man. It was predicted that the Messiah should sustain the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King: all these were assumed and exercised by Jesus. In short, all the leading particulars in the sufferings and death of the Saviour, the manner of his burial, his resurrection and ascension, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the glorious progress of the Gospel through the instrumentality of an agency which, in the eyes of the world, was mean and contemptible,—all these had been predicted; and every incident and feature of the life and death of Christ, and of the promulgation and spread of his holy Gospel, had been previously announced in type, or figure, or prophecy. The serious reader, as he ponders over these marvelous results of Divine pre-science and Divine power, may be inclined to ask, “By what means was all this effected? Through what wonderful instrumentality was all this predictive information respecting the Messiah communicated; all this knowledge of his character and work afforded; all this Divine authentication of his person and mission provided?” The answer to all these questions is, By the Hebrew dispensation. It was in the history and religion of this people that the model forms of the Saviour’s character and work were prepared. Here the embryo elements of Gospel truth and evangelical righteousness germinated, under the fostering influence of the Divine Spirit. Here, under all the varying aspects of Hebrew history, whether Israel triumphed in power, or pined in captivity, the work and purpose of God went steadily onward, until the world was prepared for God’s Messiah; and here an impregnable fortress of truth was prepared, an irrefragable proof afforded of the Divinity of His claims, who came as the world’s Redeemer.

But, further, the Mosaic dispensation was adapted to effect the stupendous purposes of redemption, by upholding, exhibiting, and adumbrating the great doctrine of atonement. The revelations of Divine truth which were made to the first pair, as an immediate consequence of the fall, asserted this doctrine, and provided, in animal sacrifice, a typical substitution, which was intended to prefigure Him who in the fullness of time should offer Himself as the great and efficient sacrifice for sin. The offering and faith of Abel, crowned as they were by the Divine “witness” which he obtained, stand out in the annals of the ancient world as an everlasting proof that, even in those early times, remission of sin, through the bloodshedding of a piacular victim, was not only a doctrine known and believed, but that, in its practical application, it operated “through faith,” which is decisive as to its having had reference to the pro-

mised Redeemer. "But how was this subject regarded by the world in general in the time of Moses? And what were the views entertained respecting it by the most polished Heathens in the time of Christ?" The practice of animal sacrifice was maintained, altars everywhere reeked with the blood of victims; in fact, the priesthood among every people were mainly occupied in preparing and presenting these bloody immolations. Yet it is a well-established fact, that, in the days of Moses, the object and nature of sacrifice were generally forgotten, or but partially and imperfectly evinced in public conduct; while, long before the termination of the Hebrew polity, the darkness which had gathered around this subject was so great, that the origin and intention of animal sacrifice were unknown, and the most profound philosophers were found searching into these mysteries in vain. What would then have been the state of mankind, in reference to this subject, if the Mosaic economy had never existed? In all probability, the doctrine of atonement through the blood-shedding of a substituted victim would have been entirely lost, and men would have been rendered, to a great extent, incapable of apprehending the true character and effects of the grand atonement, when, in the fullness of time, the Lamb of God came to bear away the sins of the world. In this respect, also, while in all surrounding nations sacrifice had lost its true character, and become associated with murder and uncleanness, the Hebrew economy preserved it in all its purity; exhibited its vicarious and propitiating efficacy, in connection with a pure and divinely appointed worship; and thus maintained in the world a permanent exposition of this Divine verity, a living witness to the truth of the evangelical principle, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" of sin. Here, therefore, is another striking instance in which the Hebrew economy was instrumental in effecting the grand purposes of redemption.

Whatever opinion, therefore, the wisdom of this world may form of the Mosaic economy,—although in the eyes of men it may seem puerile in many of its requirements, superstitious in some of its practices, and but adapted to a semi-civilized state of society in the general spirit of its legislation,—it is nevertheless an undoubted fact, that it afforded to the world a wonderful and perfectly unique exhibition of Divine government; that it gave to the elect family, and through them indirectly to surrounding nations, an important means of mental, moral, and spiritual advancement; and that it directly contributed to evolve the great process of redemption, and to bring this mighty purpose of God into full operation.

But it may be objected, that, in its direct intention, this whole religious economy failed to accomplish what appeared at least to be a

part of the Divine purpose ; namely, the continued elevation of the Jewish people ; that, notwithstanding the repeated intimations which are found in Scripture, of the perpetual kingdom of David, and of the everlasting covenant which Jehovah had confirmed with Israel, the house of David has perished from among men, and the Hebrew people are, on account of their wickedness and unbelief, cut off from covenant blessing, and scattered under the malediction of Heaven over the face of the earth. To a certain extent this allegation must be admitted ; yet it forms no objection to the scope of our argument. The Hebrew people did indeed prove disobedient and unbelieving, and consequently their covenant relation to Jehovah was broken. But this excision and its causes, instead of contravening the views which have been advanced, confirm and illustrate them. They attest the necessity of a more efficient and glorious revelation of Divine grace. It is, indeed, manifest that, notwithstanding the copious revelation of God's will which the Mosaic economy revealed, and the glorious authentication with which it was impressed, it was not fully successful in respect of the Hebrew people. The theocracy was never completely carried out ; their religious system, in all its adaptation to elevate and to bless individual mind, was never brought into general operation ; the spiritual teaching of the prophets, and the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit which accompanied it, were never successful in the general and spiritual reformation of the people. But what does all this prove ? Does it indicate that this economy was not Divine, that it was not remedial in its character, or that it was not calculated to impart those blessings which the moral circumstances of humanity required ? Nothing of the kind ! The point proved is simply this,—Human nature was so deeply fallen, the heart of man so wholly depraved, that even this interposition of God was insufficient fully to meet his case. Did the men who, throughout successive ages, had the most ample opportunities of testing the validity of the evidence upon which this economy rested its claims to a Divine origin and authority, admit or deny these claims ? They admitted them so fully, that they would readily have died in maintaining their truth. Was the scheme of doctrine which this economy taught developed with sufficient clearness to be distinctly apprehended, and sanctioned by an authority so explicit as to command belief ? The answer is in the affirmative ; and this is shown by the fact, that, when the Hebrew people stood on the threshold of national perdition, they were punctilious in their observance of the law, and orthodox in their belief of doctrine. Where was, then, the cause of failure ? In the invincible opposition of the carnal mind to the spiritual requirements of God. All that was outward

was received, everything relating to externals was believed; but the claims of Heaven to a spiritual service and a devotion of the heart, although successful in particular instances, were, even when accompanied by the glorious sanctions of the law, and the mighty influence of the Spirit of prophecy, insufficient to bring the house of Israel generally into submission to the Divine will.

This important fact is not to be overlooked in our investigation of the merciful revelations of Jehovah toward mankind. But for this, the world would never have believed such an expenditure of power, wisdom, and mercy as is revealed in the gospel, to be absolutely necessary for the salvation of mankind. Here, however, the great fact is evinced. Everything short of this had been tried. All but the sacrificial offering of the Lamb of God, and the advent of the Holy Ghost, had been effected. An ecclesiastical order had been created, a professing church had been formed; but a spiritually-minded people had not been gathered. This was reserved for the gospel.

It is, however, necessary to observe, that, in speaking of the Hebrew economy as having failed to accomplish all the Divine will, this language must be confined to the fate of the nation generally, and to the personal condition of the faithless Hebrews in particular, and not considered as at all applying to the general purposes of redemption. Under this aspect the wisdom and power of God are more clearly magnified than under any other in their history.

Here we see the seed of Abraham elected to be the covenant people of Jehovah, the means and channel through which universal blessing is to be communicated to the whole human race. And yet, although favored with the most glorious privileges, they are unfaithful. But the Lord is long-suffering: he bears with them, adapts his dispensations of mercy to their varying condition, follows them in all their devious course, spreads the range of his interposition over all the fluctuations of their national policy, all the changes of their power, all the variations of their condition; when, as the most glorious manifestations of Heaven had been resisted, we perceive, in the latter portion of their history, the operations of Divine power are more seldom and less prominently marked, until at length the Hebrews have to rely alone on worldly wisdom and power, and cease to be the recognized people of God.

But, although this mournful career shows the gradual declension of Israel until their ruin is consummated, what is the state of the case as to the great object for which they were raised to this distinguished position; namely, that in them all the families of the earth might be blessed? Here was no failure, no vacillation of purpose.

Every inflection of the political or religious condition of the Hebrews is rendered subservient to the great cause of human redemption. When David and Solomon reigned righteously, a rich effusion of grace was poured out upon Israel, and a large amount of evangelical revelation was given for the guidance of their faith. But this watchful care is most conspicuous in the declension and various afflictions and punishments to which this people were subjected. Every prediction of temporal evil was accompanied with a prophecy of the Messiah; every chastisement, with a revelation of his coming glory; all the varying dispensations which the persevering unbelief of the Hebrews called forth were identified with new illustrations of gospel times; every step which marked the declension of that people throughout successive centuries gave the world a special hope of a more glorious dispensation of grace; until, when the excision took place, and Jerusalem was ruined, and the thunder-storm of Divine anger fell upon the devoted people, God's Messiah had completed his work of mercy, and his kingdom of grace was proclaimed to the world. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" The Hebrew religion came from him; the Hebrew history is full of him.

We close our investigation into these matters with an overwhelming conviction, that they involve subjects of the deepest interest and importance; and with a hope that the reader will, by an earnest and prayerful study of the sacred volume, add to the information which our limited opportunity has permitted us to give.

A P P E N D I X .

NOTE 1, page 15.—*Circumcision.*

THE appointment of the rite of circumcision, as a sign of the covenant relation in which the seed of Abraham stood to Jehovah, holds an important position, both as an element of patriarchal religion, and a part of the ceremonial law. Yet doubts have arisen as to the origin of this practice, from the admitted fact, that other ancient nations, besides the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael, have been known to submit to the same operation. And it has been frequently supposed that the validity of the rite, as a sign of the Abrahamic covenant, would be seriously affected, if it could be shown that circumcision previously existed.

As to the historic fact, it mainly rests upon the antiquity of the practice in Egypt. Herodotus (book ii, sect. 37, 104) distinctly states that the Egyptians circumcised. Diodorus (book ii, ch. 2) and Strabo (book xvii, p. 1140) unite in the same testimony. Still the question as to the date of the origin of circumcision in Egypt returns. Michaëlis ("Comment.," vol. iii, cap. 3, sect. 1) maintains that it was practiced in Egypt at the time of the exodus, and cites in proof Joshua v, 9. But Poole and Patrick, from the same text, draw a precisely opposite opinion, and contend that this text proves the Egyptians at this time to have been uncircumcised. And Exodus vi, 12 seems to favor the latter opinion.

The prosecution of an extended inquiry into this subject would, in all probability, lead to these conclusions:—1. It by no means appears certain, that a proof of the pre-existence of circumcision would invalidate the true character of the rite, as a religious ordinance among the Hebrews. 2. That in this argument, as in many others, the most preposterous and extravagant importance has been given to the statements of Greek authors, respecting the antiquities of Egypt, as bearing upon their connection with Scripture history. When it is remembered that Moses, who lived four hundred years after Abraham, wrote nearly a thousand years before Herodotus, the oldest of the Greek authors who refer to the subject, the respective importance of the authorities may be easily estimated. 3. As the Hebrews circumcised universally, and the Egyptians regarded it as a practice only obligatory upon the priests, it is much more probable that they borrowed it from the Hebrews or Ishmaelites, than that God should appoint as a seal of *the covenant* to Abraham, a rite which at the time was a special badge of a heathen priesthood.

NOTE 2, page 19.—*Jacob's Pottage.*

"THIS pottage was made of lentiles, as we learn from the last verse of this chapter. And St. Austin upon Psalm xlv, saith they were Egyptian lentiles; which were in great esteem, and much commended by Athenæus and A. Gellius; and gave the pottage, it is probable, a red tincture. Some think Esau did not know what it was, and therefore calls it only by its color; asking for *that red, that same red*, as it is in the Hebrew. '*Therefore was his name called Edom.*' This repeated eager desire of he

knew not what, for which he sold his birthright, gave him the name of Edom, which signifies 'red.' Whence the city which he built, and the whole country his posterity inhabited, was called by the same name."—*Patrick*.

NOTE 3, page 19.—*Esau's Sale of his Birthright.*

It seems impossible to assent to the view of those writers who describe Esau as being at this time at the point of death. Dr. Adam Clarke, for instance, observes, "It appears, from the whole of this transaction, that Esau was so completely exhausted by fatigue, that he must have perished had he not obtained some immediate refreshment." This conclusion is unwarranted by the circumstances, and incredible. That the eldest son of a princely family should perish with hunger in his father's house, is absurd.

The fact appears rather to have been, that Esau, returning from the chase faint and hungry, saw Jacob with some food already prepared, which appeared to him particularly inviting; and having the condition proposed to him on reply to his request for the pottage, he recklessly bartered his birthright for his immediate sensual gratification. This opinion derives weight from the words of the Apostle, who calls Esau a "profane person, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright;" adding, "Afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears," Hebrews xii, 16, 17: language which shows that his crime consisted in a carnal depreciation of a position which stood connected with both civil and religious privilege, under the influence of an impatient and sensual spirit. If the meal had been necessary to save his life, its attainment would not have been thus spoken of.

NOTE 4, page 19.—*Isaac's Blessing.*

VARIOUS opinions have been propounded respecting the intention of Isaac in giving his blessing, the nature of the benediction, and the effect it was expected to produce. Some have supposed that the aged patriarch now intended to dispose of his property; and that as Jacob, by securing the birthright, had obtained a claim to the greater part of the family wealth, his father purposed to invest Esau with an interest in the promised inheritance of the land of Canaan. If, however, we carefully read the terms in which the blessing was given, no express reference to anything of this kind is found. They are, on the contrary, of the most general and extensive application:—*The dew of heaven*, or spiritual interposition, guidance, and blessing from on high. *The fatness of the earth*,—abundant supplies of earthly good. *Let the people serve thee*,—worldly influence, power, and authority. *Be lord over thy brethren*,—the greatest of the family, the possessor of pre-eminent dignity, the representative of its elevation and honor. But as we cannot ascertain whether the pious patriarch intended to convey his benediction in these terms, or was led beyond his purpose by a special influence from heaven, we are unable to state what was the precise effect contemplated. This much, however, is evident, that if Isaac really purposed to pronounce such a benediction on Esau, he either must have been ignorant of the divine oracle delivered to Rebekah, or must have hoped to alter or supersede it.

NOTE 5, page 24.—*Laban's Teraphim.*

MUCH wild speculation, as well as serious inquiry, has been called forth on the subject of these teraphim. Whatever doubt may exist as to their origin and form, it is certain that they were images, usually of a small size, which were employed at first by those who worshiped the true God, but were afterwards prostituted to purpose

of idolatry and superstition. As it will be necessary to go more into detail on the subject in a future note, it may be sufficient here to suggest the inquiry, whether these patriarchal teraphim were not some attempted copy of the form, or of a part of the form, of the paradisiacal cherubim; and, as such, used for the purpose of family or individual worship, in patriarchal times.

NOTE 6, page 25.—*Jacob's Wrestling.*

Few important passages of holy writ are so darkened by obscurity of language and manner as this account of Jacob's great struggle. Some light is cast upon the subject by a passage in one of the later prophets. Speaking of this case, Hosea says, "By his strength he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; even the Lord God of hosts; the Lord is his memorial." Hosea xii, 3-5. This important text, although it does not fully explain all the circumstances of this remarkable manifestation and conflict, leaves no room for doubt, that the struggle mainly consisted in earnest, persevering prayer to God.

NOTE 7, page 30.—*Bondage of the Israelites in Egypt.*

SIR GARDNER WILKINSON argues against this application of the Scripture, on the ground that the Egyptians did not distinguish between the Jews and Syrians, and because these bricks are expressly stated to have been made for a sacred building in Thebes in Upper Egypt, whilst the scene of the Israelites' bondage was in Lower Egypt. Yet, with all deference to this great authority, as he himself admits that the parties represented were either Jews or Syrians; that they are expressly declared to be captives; that Thothmes III. of the eighteenth dynasty (who was also called Moeris) then reigned, and during his government the exodus took place,—it is fully believed that the reader will agree with Mr. Osburn, that this remarkable sculpture does in all probability exhibit the rigorous service of the Hebrews. This opinion is further confirmed by the fact, that we have never heard of any Syrians having been made captives at this period; and Sir. G. Wilkinson says, "It is worthy of remark, that more bricks bearing the name of Thothmes III., whom I suppose to have been king at the time of the exodus, have been discovered, than of any other period."—*Ancient Egypt*, vol. ii, p. 98. It is, further, a very curious circumstance, that, of the ancient bricks found in Egypt, "some are made with, and others without, straw. Many have chopped barley and wheat straw; others bean-halm and stubble;"—facts which strikingly confirm the Mosaic account, Exodus v, 12.—*Wilkinson's Ancient Egypt*, vol. i, p. 50.

NOTE 8, page 36.—*Real Wonders were wrought by the Magicians.*

THE deliberate avowal of a belief that the doctrine of miracles was maintained in Heathen Egypt, and that the magicians actually wrought superhuman acts, may startle the reader, and expose the author to no little censure. But, however this may be, as his only object is the elucidation of Scriptural truth, it would be culpable were he to shrink from the expression of an honest opinion, formed after careful inquiry and deliberate reflection. The remarks made in the text on Exod. vii, 9, appear conclusive as to the demand of Pharaoh, and prove that this could only have arisen where real superhuman wonders had been seen. Many commentators have amused their readers with speculations as to the legerdemain and jugglery of those magicians. But their circumstances should be fairly considered. There is no reason for believing that the magicians were at all aware of what Moses and Aaron had done,

until they were called in before Pharaoh, and saw the serpent on the ground. They were specially sent for after the miracle was wrought, and therefore came unprepared. Apart from the admitted divinity of their mission, the argument is clearly much stronger in ascribing jugglery to the Hebrew prophets than to the Egyptian magicians. Others, refining upon the opinions to which objection has been made, tell us that the magicians produced nothing real, but only exhibited the appearance of serpents; and we are consequently expected to believe that the rod of Moses *swallowed those appearances!* Well might Dr. Adam Clarke exclaim, "Nature has no such power, and art no such influence, as to produce the effects attributed here, and in the succeeding chapters, to the Egyptian magicians." But as, notwithstanding what appears to be this plain and obvious view of the case, some persons may still be disposed to think that the ascription of miraculous powers to wicked men under any circumstances is an impeachment of revealed truth, it may be necessary to show briefly that both the Old and New Testaments distinctly recognize the view which we have taken. In Deuteronomy xiii, 1-3, Moses says, "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams." Here the possibility of wicked men working signs and wonders in support of the abominations of idolatry, is plainly taught. And it is worthy of observation, that the Hebrew word rendered "wonder" in this text is מֹחַלֵּה (mōh-phēth) the same which is translated "miracle" in Exod. vii, 9, and which is generally used in the Old Testament to denote the wonderful works which Moses by the power of God effected in Egypt. The term, therefore, does not refer to a trick, a delusion, but to a miracle. In the New Testament, also, Christ forewarned his disciples, that "there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders." Matt. xxiv, 24.

Although deprecating, as sincerely as any, the unnecessary ascription of miraculous power, and the superstitious interpretation of Scripture, we dare not endeavor to make our views more palatable by concealing what appears to be the plain sense of holy writ.

NOTE 9, page 38.—*These Wonders wrought by Demon Agency.*

HAVING in the preceding note given it as our opinion that the appearances produced by the magicians were real wonders, it is necessary to state our views of the agency by which these superhuman acts were produced. This becomes indispensable from the conflicting opinions which have been propounded on this point also. Shuckford, who is very earnest in refuting those who contend that the works of the magicians consisted only in deceptive appearances, nevertheless asserted "that the Egyptians had no reason to think that their incantations would produce serpents, but they would try all experiments, in order to judge further of the matter; and, upon their attempting, God was pleased to give an unexpected success to their endeavors, in order to serve and carry on his own purposes and designs by it. For the success they had was certainly unexpected."—*Connection*, vol. ii, p. 542. That Pharaoh, if he had never seen any superhuman act, or heard of such being performed, should, in the presence of a great miracle, have sent for wise men to attempt a similar prodigy; that they, never having performed anything wonderful, should, on an occasion of such importance, in the presence of the king, have attempted this achievement; and, stranger than all, that God should have given them miraculous power that they might the better oppose his own commissioned servants, appear altogether such

improbable conclusions,—the latter supposition especially, placing, as it does, the divine administration under the ban of our Divine Teacher's "house divided against itself,"—that we are compelled to seek a more consistent interpretation.

That the conclusion to be placed before the reader may be given with the greatest brevity, it may be stated that, in our opinion, the magicians effected their superhuman works by demon-agency. Two or three brief observations in support of this opinion shall suffice. First.—This appears, in the absence of any proof to the contrary, to be the reasonable and natural inference. If a man is heard speaking Spanish or Dutch, without further information he would be regarded as a Spaniard or a Dutchman. If a person should be seen constructing a watch, it would be inferred that he was by trade a watchmaker. So, as we know that the great system of idolatry is the master-piece of satanic subtilty and power; that, in fact, the heathen deities were devils, Lev. xvii, 7; Deut. xxxii, 17; 1 Cor. x, 20, &c.;—when we find superhuman efforts put forth in support of this system, is it not reasonable to ascribe this power to demon-agency? In the absence, therefore, of direct Scriptural information on the subject, this would be the natural and obvious interpretation of the difficulty.

But it is alleged that these magicians were certainly a kind of conjurors; that it is notorious they often attempted to cheat and deceive. Be it so: were they on this account less suitable instruments of demon-agency?

But the principal objection is this: "Miracles have been regarded as a great proof of the divinity of revealed truth. Do we not, then, by attributing these wonders to demon-influence, sap a great bulwark of Scriptural evidence?" This subject shall be fully discussed elsewhere; but here it may be answered by saying, The truth of the Bible can never be sustained by rejecting its teaching, nor injured by admitting it. A case is presented to us in the damsel at Philippi, in which a sooth-sayer, whose powers were prostituted for gain, was actually enabled to exercise superhuman ability by an indwelling demon. This is proved by the fact, that when the spirit was cast out, "her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone." Acts xvi, 19. The fact, therefore, that diabolical agency has been exerted in this manner, is a Scripture verity. That this was fully believed by the Old Testament Church, may be fairly presumed from the wicked assertion of the Jews respecting Christ, saying that he did "not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." Matt. xii, 24. Again: we meet this doctrine in the Apocalypse, where we hear of "the spirits of devils working miracles." Rev. xvi, 14. This whole case is stated with equal ability and caution by Dr. Cudworth, who divides supernatural effects into two classes;—the one, which, "though they could not be done by natural causes, might, notwithstanding, be done, *God permitting only*, by the ordinary and natural power of other invisible created spirits, angels, or demons." But "there is another sort of miracles, or effects supernatural, such as are above the power of all second causes, or any natural created being whatsoever, and so can be attributed to none but God Almighty himself." Hence the distinction which the philosophers make between *wonders*, or supernatural results of the first kind, and *miracles*, or those of the second.—*Cudworth's Intellectual System*.

Such wonders were the works of the magicians in opposition to Moses, God permitting them to manifest their utmost ability in support of idolatry as long as it seemed good in his sight. No other principle accounts for the phenomena. Why, then, should men persist in the most improbable expositions, when, as Dr. Adam Clarke says, it is so "much more rational at once to allow that these magicians had familiar spirits who could assume all shapes, change the appearances of the subjects upon which they operated, or suddenly convey one thing away and substitute another in its place?"

It would not have been thought necessary to dwell at such length on this point, had it not been considered that, next to the being and influence of the Spirit of God, the most disagreeable truth ever propounded to fallen man is the certain existence and evil agency of Satan.

NOTE 10, page 42.—*Human Sacrifices of the Egyptians.*

It is but just to say that Sir Gardner Wilkinson discredits the statements of Manetho and Diodorus. But when any writer, however eminent, rejects the testimony of great historical authorities, we are not only at liberty to examine the grounds assigned for such rejection, but are bound to do so. In this case Sir Gardner's reasons are most unsatisfactory. He rejects the testimony of these ancient writers, because he regards it as "totally inconsistent with the feelings of a civilized people, and directly contrary to the usages of the Egyptians."—*Ancient Egypt*, vol. v, p. 341. But is this conclusive? Did the civilization of Greece or Rome in the best periods of their history prevent such immolations? And if not, why should such a result be expected in Egypt? Surely, then, when several credible witnesses distinctly state an historical fact, without any direct counter evidence, we ought not to pronounce it false for reasons which, when fairly tested in other countries, have not produced the results which are thus ascribed to them.

NOTE 11, page 46.—*The Borrowing of the Israelites from the Egyptians.*

Of those numerous writers who take every opportunity of depreciating the Bible, many have been careful to dilate upon the impropriety of the Israelites borrowing goods of the Egyptians, when about finally to leave the country, and, consequently, without any intention of repayment. In addition to what is said in the text in explanation of this conduct, and on the justice of this requital, it will be quite sufficient to observe, that the idea of *borrowing* arises entirely from the English translation, and has no place in the original, which is literally "to ask." So the Septuagint reads: "Every woman shall *ask* of her neighbor," &c. Should any one still contend for rendering the word לָקַח "borrow," let him try to render it so in Psalm cxxii, 6, "O borrow the peace of Jerusalem."—*Kennicott*.

NOTE 12, page 46.—*Number of the Hebrews on leaving Egypt.*

DR. ADAM CLARKE gives the following calculation of the number of persons who left Egypt in the Israelitish host at the exodus:—

Effective men 20 years old and upward.....	600,000
Two-thirds of these we may suppose were married; in which case their wives would amount to.....	400,000
These, on the average, might have five children under 20 years of age,—an estimate less than each family must have had to produce from 75 persons 600,000 effective men in 196 years.....	2,000,000
Levites, probably not included as effective men.....	45,000
Their wives.....	33,000
Their children.....	165,000
The mixed multitude, probably not less than.....	20,000
	<hr/>
	3,263,000

besides a multitude of old and infirm persons who would be obliged to ride on camels and asses. Exclude even the Levites and their families, and upwards of three millions will be left.

NOTE 13, page 47.—*Chronology of this Period.*

THE statement in Exod. xii, 40, that "the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years," is clearly contrary to fact and other portions of holy writ. The passage has therefore greatly embarrassed chronologers and commentators. Dr. Kennicott has given a satisfactory explanation: "That the children or descendants of Israel did not sojourn or dwell four hundred and thirty years in Egypt, may be easily, and has been frequently demonstrated. Leaving others in their endeavor to extract the true sense of Moses out of words not his own, or rather out of a sentence not now found in the Hebrew text as he expressed it, let us see what the Samaritan text, that valuable copy of the Pentateuch, gives us in this place:—'Now the sojourning of the children of Israel and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.' All here is truly consistent, and worthy the pen of Moses. This same sum is given by St. Paul, (Gal. iii, 17,) who reckons from the promise made to Abraham (when God commanded him to go into Canaan) to the giving of the law, which soon followed the exodus of the Israelites: and this apostolical chronology is exactly concordant with the Samaritan Pentateuch. For, from Abraham's entering Canaan to the birth of Isaac was twenty-five years. Gen. xii, 4; xvii, 1, 21. Isaac was sixty years old at the birth of Jacob. Gen. xxv, 26. Jacob was one hundred and thirty at his going down into Egypt, Gen. xlvii, 9; which three numbers make two hundred and fifteen years; and then Jacob and his children having continued in Egypt two hundred and fifteen years more, the whole sum is regularly completed."—*Dissertations*, p. 398.

NOTE 14, page 48.—*Route of the Israelites from Egypt, and miraculous Passage of the Red Sea.*

MANY conflicting opinions have been put forward respecting the route of the Israelites from Egypt; and these necessarily involve the question of the situation of the Land of Goshen. Dr. Robinson places this district in the present province of Eth-Shūrkiyeh, on the east of the Delta, along the Pelusiatic arm of the Nile. On the contrary, Major Rennell, who is followed by Dr. Wilson, supposes Goshen to have been "in the district of Heliopolis, on the apex of the Delta, on the east extending as far as Cairo." It is not necessary to attempt a decision between these opposing authorities, inasmuch as it appears sufficiently evident, that in either case the neighborhood of Suez must have been in their line of march. Dr. Wilson supposes them to have passed through the Wady Ramliyah, to the south of Jebel Mukattam and Jebel Reibun. But there appear to be insuperable objections to this hypothesis: while, on the contrary, Etham, which is said to have been on the edge of the wilderness, was, in all probability, very near Suez; for after the Israelites had passed the Red Sea, they are said to have traveled through the Desert of Shur: but in the Book of Numbers the same tract is called the Desert of Etham; a fact which seems to prove that Etham was not far from Suez, and therefore gave its name to a part of the wilderness beyond the Red Sea. Thus far, whether the Hebrews came from the neighborhood of Heliopolis or of Zoan, their course would have been that which was likely to have been taken. But at Etham their course was altered by Divine command: instead of passing into the wilderness by leaving Suez to the right hand, they turned to the south; and, leaving Suez to the left hand, took their way between the Red Sea and Jebel 'Atakah. By this movement they were perfectly inclosed as in a net; a range of mountains lay before them, a valley on their right led back to

Egypt, and might have been full of Egyptians, while Pharaoh followed in their rear. Here the Lord wrought deliverance for his people; and it is remarkable, that at this place, Ras 'Attakah, where the Red Sea is about ten or twelve miles wide, every circumstance seems to favor the opinion that the passage was made. Here the valley expands into a considerable plain, bounded by lofty precipitous mountains on the right and left, and by the sea in front, and is sufficiently ample to accommodate the vast number of human beings who composed both armies. An east wind would act almost directly across the gulf. It would be unable to co-operate with an ebb tide in removing the waters: no objection, certainly, if we admit the exercise of God's miraculous agency; but a very great impediment in the way of any rationalistic hypothesis. The channel is wide enough to allow the movements described by Moses; and the time, which embraced an entire night, was sufficient for the convenient march of a large army over such a distance; while the depth of the waters, and all the other circumstances, exactly harmonize with the Scripture account. And, "so far as aversion to miracle has had an influence in the hypotheses which have been given, all we shall remark is, that in a case which is so evidently represented as the sphere of miracle, there is but one alternative,—they who do not admit the miracle must reject the narrative; and far better would it be to do so frankly than to construct hypotheses, which are for the most part, if not altogether, purely arbitrary. A narrative obviously miraculous (in the intention of the writer) can be explained satisfactorily on no rationalistic principles: this is not to expound, but to 'wrest,' the Scriptures."—*Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*.

NOTE 15, page 55.—*The Song of Moses.*

OF this sublime composition Bishop Lowth says, "The most perfect example which I know of that species of the sublime ode, possessing a sublimity dependent wholly upon the sublimity of the conceptions and the dignity of the language, without any peculiar excellence in the form and arrangement, is the thanksgiving ode of Moses, composed after passing the Red Sea. Every part of it breathes the spirit of nature and of passion; joy, admiration, and love, united with piety and devotion, burst forth spontaneously in their native colors. To take a strict account of the sublimity of this ode would be to repeat the whole." And the Rev. J. H. Caunter says, "I have no hesitation in affirming that this composition is unequalled by anything of a similar kind. It appears to have been intended for alternate recitation; and this was no doubt accompanied by the musical instruments then in use; and from the choruses it is clear that the whole was sung as a thanksgiving hymn, to solemnize the great deliverance of the Israelites." Kennicott argues in defense of the recitative character of the poem; but Geddes asserts this opinion to be "pure fancy."—*Lowth's Poetry of the Pentateuch*, præf. xxvii, vol. i, p. 255.

NOTE 16, page 57.—*The Healing of the Waters.*

NUMEROUS speculations have been put forth respecting this healing of the waters, and many and desperate efforts have been made for the purpose of accounting on natural principles for the effects described. It should be remembered, that there can be no doubt as to the strict accuracy of the description. The spot is even now well known, and the bitterness of the water remains. When Dr. Wilson was at the place, in 1843, on his taking some of the water to drink, the Arabs cried out, *Murrah, murrah, murrah!* "It is bitter, bitter, bitter!" On this subject this eminent scholar and traveler observes, "The Badawin of these deserts know of no process now of sweetening bitter water; but the credulity of rationalism can find one sufficiently potent for the purpose of effecting a change in a supply of the element required for

the two millions and a half of souls comprising the hosts of Israel. Burckhardt has directed our attention to a plant, delighting, like the palm, in a saline soil, and growing near this and similar fountains. It is called *Ghackad* by the Arabs. The juice of its berries might be adequate, it is alleged, to qualify the nauseous liquid. But where, it may be asked, could a sufficient quantity of these berries be found to make a million or two of gallons of drinking sirup?"—*Lands of the Bible*, vol. i, p. 172. But, to make this rationalistic notion appear in all its native absurdity, it is only necessary to add, that the Israelites were at Marah within a month after the institution of the passover at the vernal equinox, whereas those berries do not ripen till June.—*Kitto's Cyclopædia*, art. *Marah*.

NOTE 17, page 57.—*The Laws given at Marah.*

CRITICS are greatly divided in opinion as to "the statute and ordinance" here spoken of. Pool says, it is not to be understood of any particular law, but should be regarded as a general injunction, like that given to Abraham, Genesis xvii, 1: Bishop Horsley, "There he appointed for them" (or prescribed to them) "an express rule," some more precise and definite direction than they had previously received. But perhaps Patrick has the more accurate idea, who regards it as a revelation of some particulars intended for their guidance until they came to Sinai to receive a complete canon of law.

NOTE 18, page 58.—*Quails.*

A QUESTION has been raised by Bishop Patrick, who, following some earlier writers, rejects the authorized translation of *סלע* (*selav*), and contends that these creatures were not quails, but locusts. But this notion seems to be satisfactorily refuted by Mr. Harmer. The following is an abridgment of his observations:—The bishop rested his objection to the authorized version upon three points: 1. Their coming by a wind; 2. Their immense quantities, covering a circle of thirty or forty miles, two cubits thick; 3. Their being spread in the sun for drying, which would have been preposterous had they been quails; for it would have made them corrupt the sooner; but this is the principal way of preparing locusts to keep for a month or more.

With respect to their coming by means of a wind, it is well known that locusts were carried by this instrumentality; and Mr. Harmer asks, "Why might not the same agent bring quails?" It is certain that these are birds of passage, and that their flight is influenced by the temperature. Maillet says, that as soon as the cold is felt in Europe, turtles, quails, and other birds, come to Egypt in great numbers. If, then, the change of climate is thus shown to be the certain cause of the migrations of these birds, what difficulty is there in supposing that a hot, sultry wind, by presenting a more genial temperature, might have brought this multitude of quails to the Hebrew camp?

With respect to their numbers, the bishop exaggerates. He supposes a day's journey to be sixteen or twenty miles, and thence infers that a circle of this radius was covered two cubits deep with these creatures. But whether these were quails or locusts, this is a violent rendering of the text. Num. xi, 31. Josephus seems to have taken the correct view of the subject, who says, that this multitude of birds, wearied with their flight, flew about two cubits, that is, three or four feet, from the ground; so that the people could take them at pleasure; the miracle consisting in their coming at that precise time, and in such numbers, and so slowly, that a cloud of birds, fifteen or twenty miles in breadth, was two days and one night passing over the camp.

But the learned prelate appears to rest his objection mainly on the fact of spread,

ing these creatures in the sun to dry. This, the bishop complains, supposing they were quails, no interpreter has explained. A passage from Maillet is a complete answer to this complaint. This writer states, that great numbers of birds take refuge in one of the islands near Alexandria; that these were taken in such numbers, that the crews of vessels in the harbor had no other flesh allowed them. The manner of preserving was by stripping off the feathers with the skin, and then burying them in the hot sand for a short time, by which the moisture is absorbed, and the flesh preserved from putrefaction. Maillet expressly mentions quails as among the birds so caught and preserved in the harbors of Egypt; and if the Israelites are supposed to have acted in a similar manner on their departure from that country, all the difficulty of the case is removed. (See *Harmer's Observations*, vol. iv, p. 359.)

NOTE 19, page 59.—*The Manna a Miracle.*

IN accordance with the practice, so prevalent in modern times, of excluding the miraculous agency of God from his interpositions on behalf of his people, and explaining away whatever may appear as superhuman, or above the ordinary operations of nature, much learned ingenuity has been employed in this case for the purpose of showing that the manna was a natural and ordinary production. Hence "it has been assumed by modern lexicographers, and other writers in Germany generally, that the manna here spoken of is a sort of gum, still found in certain parts of the deserts of Arabia, and elsewhere in the East. But nothing can be more improbable than this; for, 1. Had this been the case, the Israelites could not have been ignorant of what it was. 2. It would not have bred worms, nor have stunk. 3. It would not have been found in a double portion on the day preceding the Sabbath, and not at all on that day. 4. Its being a small round thing, like coriander-seed, is proof sufficient that it was not the gum above-mentioned; as is the fact, 5. That it continued to fall during the whole forty years of the sojourning of the Israelites in the desert, and ceased on the morrow after they had entered Canaan.—Dr. Lee's *Hebrew Lexicon*, 367, a.

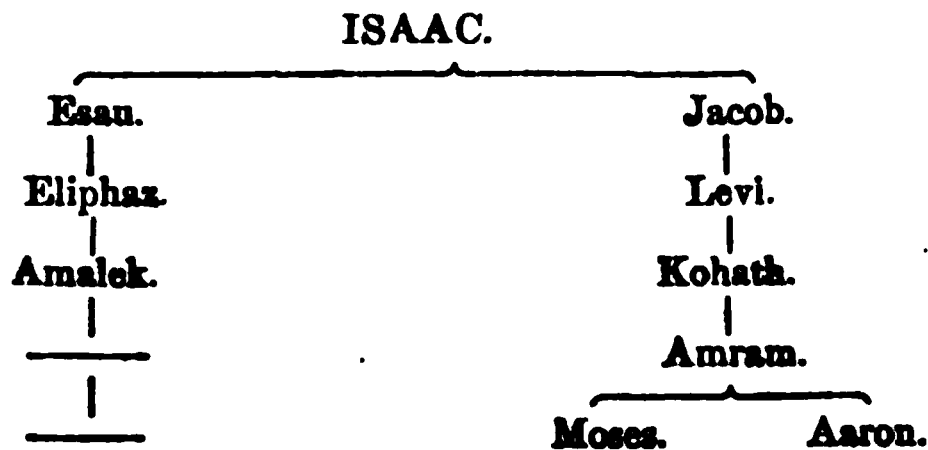
To these may be added another and equally decided and important proof of the miraculous character of this supply: the manna of the Scriptures fell around every encampment of the Israelites in the entire circuit of their journeying from the coast of the Red Sea through the deserts of Sinai, in the wilderness of Zin, on the borders of Edom, and to the banks of the Jordan; and in sufficient quantities to sustain millions of people. Against these facts it is nothing to object, that the leaves of the tamarisk naturally exude a substance, very much like that which Moses describes. Did these plants so universally abound, that at every encampment a certain supply of manna, sufficient in quantity to feed a nation, was sure to be obtained? When, since the days of Moses, could one million of people have been sustained by manna, following the route of the Israelites? And if this is acknowledged to be impossible, how captious and puerile do these attempts appear, which are put forward for the purpose of depreciating or destroying the effect of this great miracle! Those who bow to the authority of Holy Scripture will have no doubt on this subject, as it declares that the manna was specially provided by the goodness of God, and was altogether peculiar and previously unknown. "He fed thee with manna which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know." Deut. viii, 3, 16. It may be observed that the words in Exodus xvi, 15, are improperly rendered in the authorized version, and much ambiguity thrown around the subject in consequence: the passage should be read, "When the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, What is it? For they knew not what it was." The interrogation, "What is it?" (*Man-hu*) being adopted as the name of the substance, is left untranslated in the text.

NOTE 20, page 60.—*The smitten Rock.*

"THE Bible affords us no data for precisely fixing the position of the smitten rock. It is merely mentioned as the 'rock in Horeb,' and it was probably contiguous to or a part of Sinai. It is too seldom borne in mind, that, though the Israelites were supplied with water from the rock when they were stationed at Rephidim, there is nothing in the Scripture narrative which should lead us to suppose that the rock was in the immediate neighborhood of that place. 'The Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee the elders of Israel: and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thy hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.' The water of the smitten rock was probably that which was alluded to by Moses, when he said, 'I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and ground it very small, even until it was as small as dust, and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the Mount.' The water may have flowed to the Israelites when encamped at Rephidim, at the distance of miles from the rock, as the winter torrents do now through the Wádís of Arabia Petræa. In fact, the language of the Psalmist would lead us to conclude that this was actually the case: 'He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.' The rock, too, may have been smitten at such a height, and at a place bearing such a relation to the Sinaitic valleys, as to furnish in this way supplies of water to these Israelites, during the first of their journeyings 'from Horeb by way of Mount Seir unto Kadesh-Barnea.' Deut. i, 2. On this supposition new light is perhaps cast on the figurative language of the apostle, when he speaks of the 'rock following' the Israelites. On this supposition, also, we see a reason why the rock should have been smitten to yield a large supply to flow to a distance, even though springs and small rills might have been found pre-existent in Sinai." Speaking afterward of Rephidim, the same author says, "It is to be particularly noticed, that the water from the rock in Horeb could easily flow to them at this very place, on the only road practicable to them from the Wády Feirán (near Mount Paran) to Sinai. I was greatly struck with the regular descent from Sinai of this water-channel through the Wádi esh-Sheikh; and I cannot resist directing particular attention to the impression connected with it which I have mentioned."—*Lands of the Bible*, vol. i, pp. 233-235, 254.

NOTE 21, page 60.—*Amalek.*

COMMENTATORS generally inform us that the Amalekites were descendants of Amalek, son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau; and ingenious speculations have been propounded as to the motives which induced this attack, based upon the supposed derivation of the tribe. But a moment's inquiry will be sufficient to show that this notion is groundless. Observe, first, the line of descent in the families of Esau and Jacob:—



A glance at this is sufficient to show, that a tribe, whose father was contemporary with the grandfather of Moses, could not have been so numerous as to send out an army whose number and prowess held the strength of all the twelve tribes of Israel at defiance, and placed the existence of the Hebrew people in trembling jeopardy for a whole day. The almost miraculous multiplication of the Israelites renders this impossible.

But this is not the only difficulty. The Amalekites are mentioned as one of the tribes which were smitten by Chedorlaomer and the confederate kings, in the days of Abraham. Genesis xiv, 7. This high antiquity of the Amalekites is fully justified by the language of Balaam, who said, "*Amalek was the first of the nations.*" Num. xxiv, 20. It is further worthy of remark, that Moses does not in any way allude to their having any relationship to Israel; nor did the Edomites, when the Amalekites were destroyed by Saul, manifest any sympathy for them, or put forth any efforts in their behalf, as might have been expected, if, having sprung from the grandson of Esau, they had been an integral part of the Edomite family.

These views are supported by the Arabian historians, who deduce the genealogy of Amalek thus: Noah—Ham—Aram—Uz—Ad—Amalek. The founder of this nation would thus be placed some generations older than Abraham. They say also, that the Amalekites, in ancient times, possessed the country about Mecca; whence they were expelled by the Jorhamite kings.—See *Ancient Universal History*, vol. i, p. 383.

Pressed by these difficulties, Calmet supposed there might be three tribes called by this name: 1. Amalek the ancient, located near the Jordan. Gen. xii. 2. Amalek in the region to the east of Egypt. And here it must be observed, that there is a place in the wilderness of Sinai which at this day is called Wady Am-halik. 3. Amalek, son of Eliphaz. Without referring to the last, may it not be reasonably concluded, that the first and second were the same people? In those early times large and powerful bodies were migratory, even more so than they are at present in those regions. And as intelligence of the exodus of the Hebrews was noised abroad, and it was said that they had come out of Egypt with great substance, the Amalekites might have thought that by assailing them they would be sure of a rich booty; and, as far as our information extends, nothing but the interposition of Heaven prevented the gratification of their cupidity. The malediction of Balaam supports this opinion.

NOTE 22, page 62.—*Jethro's Visit to Moses.*

GREAT difference of opinion obtains amongst interpreters as to the precise period when this visit of Jethro to Moses took place. Selden, Lightfoot, and Horsley, contend that it occurred after the giving of the law; and this opinion is adopted by Townsend, and defended by Dr. Adam Clarke. On the other hand, Dr. Hales, Bishop Patrick, Shuckford, and the authors of the *Universal History*, suppose it to have happened while the Israelites lay at Rephidim, and according to the order in which the event is recorded in the Mosaic narrative. The subject of this controversy cannot be discussed here at length. It will be sufficient to observe, that, after due deliberation, the latter opinion appears well founded; and that the arguments advanced in favor of the other do not so much affect the date of the visit, as the time when his advice to Moses was acted upon. Bishop Patrick, therefore, appears to have solved the difficulty, by supposing that Jethro visited the camp at Rephidim, although the judges were not appointed, agreeably to his advice, until after the giving of the law.

NOTE 23, page 71.—*The Meekness of Moses.*

THE manner in which Moses speaks of himself in connection with this event, has given rise to much cavil: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." Num. xii, 3. Spinoza and other skeptics have maintained that no man would write such an eulogium on himself, and therefore that the narrative cannot be relied upon as the production of Moses. If the term rendered "meek" in our version had been rightly translated, an answer might be made to this objection; but it is not. An eminent lexicographer on this word observes, "גָּחַן *Gāh-nāhō*,' which is here rendered 'meek,' should be read, 'humble, meek, poor, afflicted,' as the context may require." Applying this rule to the present case, there can be no doubt as to the term which should be selected to convey the meaning of the inspired writer. He had been so harassed at the last station as to be nearly overwhelmed with trouble; and now he is opposed most violently by those who ought to have given him the most cordial support: what, then, could be more natural than that Moses, when recording this circumstance, should say that Moses was the most *afflicted* of men?

NOTE 24, page 72.—*The Situation of Kadesh.*

THE reader may feel surprised when informed, that not only is the geography of a great portion of the route of the Hebrews to be yet fully determined, but that the exact situation of this important station, Kadesh-Barnea, is still open to dispute. Even our most safe guides, the recent learned travelers, Dr. Wilson and Dr. Robinson, are directly opposed to each other. The former, relying on Ezekiel xlvi, 19, and xlviii, 28, supposes Kadesh to have been nearly west of Kurnub, which is conjectured to be the same with Tamar. This would situate Kadesh to the south-west of Beersheba. But the learned writer, in thus depending upon Ezekiel, appears to have forgotten the explicit declaration of Moses, that *the* Kadesh-Barnea station was a city in the uttermost border of Edom. Num. xx, 16. This would lead to the adoption of Dr. Robinson's opinion, if the spot which he recommends in the present Ain-el-Weibeh, had not been destitute of every vestige of ruins which would indicate that a town once stood there. In those circumstances Dr. Kitto, following Raumer, appears to have selected the most probable opinion, that Kadesh stood where the present ruins are found at Ain-el-Kurar, which is about ten miles south of the spot selected by Dr. Robinson. (See *Lands of the Bible*, vol. i, p. 343; *Biblical Researches*, vol. ii, pp. 582-610, 662; and *Biblical Cyclopædia*, vol. ii, p. 930.)

NOTE 25, page 72.—*Absurdity of rationalistic Interpretation.*

THERE are few facts more painful to an intelligent and Christian reader, than the pertinacity with which learned writers persist in ascribing the course of the Israelites to the calculating prudence and clear-sighted policy of Moses. In what sense do such persons regard the solemn declarations of the inspired writer, that "the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them in the way," and continued to do so throughout the journey; for "He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people,"—that in very deed "*the LORD himself did lead them*?" Are these statements mythic legends, or the authentic words of the Holy Spirit? It is intolerable that men will pretend to explain, illustrate, and even defend, the verities of revelation; and yet covertly make "the word of God of none effect," by rationalistic denials of all the glorious interpositions which attest the Divinity of the sacred oracles.

NOTE 26, page 77.—*Miriam.*

MIRIAM was certainly a remarkable character in Hebrew history. She was older than either Aaron or Moses. At the birth of the latter she was able to manage with great dexterity the delicate business of introducing herself to Pharaoh's daughter, and inducing her to intrust the boy to a Hebrew nurse, by which measure his infancy was spent with his parents. She is supposed by some to have been married to Hur; but Roman Catholic writers maintain her perpetual virginity. Eusebius says that her tomb was to be seen at Kadesh near the city of Petræa in his time.

NOTE 27, page 78.—*The Sin of Moses.*

WHAT was the precise sin of Moses in this transaction? The question has been frequently put, and seldom obtained a satisfactory solution. Dr. Adam Clarke appears to have succeeded where many others have failed. "It appears," he observes, "to have consisted in some or all of the following particulars: 1. God had commanded him (verse 8) *to take the rod in his hand, and go and SPEAK TO THE ROCK, and it should give forth water.* It seems that Moses did not think that speaking would be sufficient: therefore, he *smote* the rock without any command to do so. 2. He did this twice, which certainly in this case indicated a great perturbation of spirit, and want of attention to the presence of God. 3. He permitted his spirit to be carried away by a sense of the people's disobedience, and thus, being *provoked*, he was led *to speak unadvisedly with his lips*: '*Hear now, ye REBELS.*' Verse 10. 4. He did not acknowledge GOD in the miracle which was about to be wrought, but took the honor to himself and Aaron: '*Must we fetch you water out of this rock?*' Thus it plainly appears, that they did not properly *believe* in God, and did not *honor* him before the people; for in their presence they seem to express a doubt whether the thing could be possibly done. As Aaron appears to have been consenting in the above particulars, therefore he is also excluded from the promised land."—*Dr. Adam Clarke, on Numbers xx, 12.*

NOTE 28, page 79.—*The brazen Serpent.*

SIR J. MARSHAM has on this subject given currency to the strange conceit, that this brazen serpent was some imitation of the incantations of the Egyptians. There can, however, be no reasonable doubt, but that, as it was divinely appointed, so it was adapted and designed, not only to heal the bitten Israelites, but likewise to provide a means of doing so, which should call forth a lively exercise of faith in the goodness and power of Jehovah.

NOTE 29, page 80.—*The Plains of Moab.*

IN order fully to understand the statements of Holy Scripture with respect to these circumstances, it is necessary to remember that the Amorites were originally located on the west side of Jordan. Here they were in the days of Abraham, and of Jacob. But during the stay of the Hebrews in Egypt they had passed the river, and wrested from the Moabites an important district. This was bounded on the north-east by the territory of the Ammonites, on the south by the river Arnon, and on the east by the wilderness. The Arnon, therefore, was the line of separation between the district which had been taken from the Moabites, and that which they still retained.

These circumstances explain the otherwise embarrassing fact, that when the Israelites had occupied the country of the Amorites, they are said to have "*set forward and pitched in the plains of Moab on this side Jordan by Jericho,*" Num. xxxii, 1; this being a level strip of land on the east bank of the Jordan in the

country thus taken from the Amorites, which retained the name from its having been formerly in the possession of Moab.

NOTE 30, page 82.—*Numbering of the People.*

THE results of this enumeration of the people, as compared with that which took place at Sinai, are in some respects curious and important. They are shown in the following table:—

	Census at Sinai.	Census on the Plains of Moab.	Decrease.	Increase.	Families.
Reuben	46,500	43,700	2,770		4
Simeon	59,300	22,200	37,100		5
Gad	45,650	40,500	5,150		7
Judah	74,600	76,500		1,900	5
Issachar	54,400	64,300		9,900	4
Zebulun	57,400	60,500		3,100	3
Manassch	32,200	52,700		20,500	8
Ephraim	40,500	32,500	8,000		4
Benjamin	35,400	45,600		10,200	7
Dan	62,700	64,400		1,700	1
Asher	41,500	53,400		11,900	5
Naphtali	53,400	45,400	8,000		4
	<u>603,550</u>	<u>601,730</u>	<u>61,020</u>	<u>59,200</u>	<u>57</u>
		Deduct increase . .	59,200		
		Net decrease	1,820		

From this it appears, that at the last census the congregation of Israel numbered 1,820 fighting men less than when they were encamped at Sinai. Such was the result of their repeated rebellions. But for the loss by the plague in the sin of Baal-peor alone, there would have been an increase of 22,200 instead of this decrease.

It is further worthy of observation, that the number of families given in this census is 57; to which if we add Jacob and his sons, the total is 70, the exact number that went down into Egypt.

NOTE 31, page 94.—*The patriarchal Priesthood.*

SCARCELY any Biblical subject presents greater difficulty than an inquiry into the origin and primitive character of the priestly institution. There can be no doubt that the first man was the first priest; and it has been usually inferred that thenceforward this dignity or office descended upon the first-born. This notion has been shown to have no foundation. (*Patrick's Commentary*, Exod. xix, 22.) It evidently arose out of the special dedication of the first-born of the Israelites to the Lord. But as this resulted not from any privilege of primogeniture or right to the priesthood, but was in consequence of God's preservation of them, when all the first-born of the Egyptians were suddenly destroyed, it could have had no effect anterior to the exodus, nor beyond the influence of the Hebrew family. Nor did it obtain among them; for there is no notice of these having acted as priests; and in a short time the tribe of Levi was divinely appointed to this office, and the first-born were commanded to be redeemed at the price of five shekels for each individual. Numbers xviii, 16. It is therefore most probable that from the beginning every head of a family acted in this capacity for himself and his household. This was evidently the

case in primitive times; for Abel presented his offering as Cain had also done. In this way the ancient patriarchs exercised the priestly office on behalf of themselves and their dependents.

But the principal points which claim our attention in this inquiry, are the precise character of this office, and the change which took place in this respect, when the several families of a patriarchal tribe became so numerous and united as to worship together as one people. On the character of the priestly office we can scarcely obtain more clear or authoritative information than that which is given by St. Paul: "Every high priest taken from among men is constituted on the behalf of men with respect to their concerns with God, that he may present both gifts and sacrifices for sins." Heb. v, 1. The primitive meaning of the Hebrew word, *קֹהֵן*, which we render "priests," is not easily determined, because the verb in its radical form nowhere occurs. Gesenius observes, "In Arabic it denotes 'to prophesy, to foretell as a sooth-sayer;' and among the Heathen Arabs the substantive bore the latter signification: also that of a mediator or middle person, who interposed in any business; which seems to be its radical meaning, as prophets and priests were regarded as mediators between men and the Deity. In the earliest families of the race of Shem, the offices of priest and prophet were undoubtedly united; so that the word originally denoted both, and at last the Hebrew idiom kept one part of the idea, and the Arabic another." It is worthy of remark that all the persons who are recorded in Scripture as having legally performed priestly acts, but who were not strictly sacerdotal, come under the definition of "prophets;" namely, persons who received supernatural communications of knowledge generally, as Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Job, Samuel, Elijah.

From the whole, then, it appears that a priest was "a man who officiates or transacts business with God on behalf of others, statedly, or for the occasion;" and that this person was supposed to be divinely taught, and enabled to communicate to others a knowledge of God. Thus, from the beginning of the world, was the appointed way of worship made in some sense typical and prefigurative of man's promised great High Priest, and appointed Mediator with God.

But while in primitive times every head of a family thus officiated, it is certain that before the exodus, as men were multiplied upon the earth, they were induced by their common interest and public need to worship, not as separate families, but collectively as a people. This led to the appointment of persons to the office of the priesthood, as a public institution. In Egypt several colleges of priests had been appointed, and these were devoted to the service of different deities; and among the Hebrews, also, it seems that certain persons were distinguished as sustaining this office. In what manner they were appointed cannot now be ascertained: but it is highly probable that they were selected from the most wealthy and powerful families. The priesthood of Egypt was hereditary, and identical with its nobility. (*Diodorus Siculus*, lib. i, cap. 3.) That of ancient Rome was elected from among those "of distinguished birth, and virtue, and competent fortune," (*Dion. Hal.*, lib. ii, cap. 21;) and this system was modeled from that of the Greeks; and it is highly probable that a similar course was pursued by the Hebrews, and that the princes of the several tribes were appointed to this sacred office. The first mention of priests as an institution among the descendants of Jacob, occurs before the giving of the law, (Exodus xix, 22,) and proves the existence of the order prior to the revelations of Sinai. It was the opinion of Selden that these ante-Sinaitic priests are repeatedly referred to by Moses in the phrases, "the priests the Levites," Deut. xvii, 9; and "the priests the sons of Levi," xxi, 5; and even by the words, "the Levites" alone, xviii, 7, comp. 1. (*De Synedr.*, li, 8, pp. 2, 3,) But, however this may be, it is certain that, prior to the exodus,

the patriarchal system had been so fully developed that the priesthood as an order was established among the faithful worshipers of Jehovah. (See Dr. Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, art. *Priests*; and Outram *De Sacrificiis*, dis. i, cap. 4.)

NOTE 32, page 96.—*The Place of Patriarchal Worship.*

THE first and ordinary mode of worshiping God in patriarchal times was by sacrifice on an altar in the open air, generally on the top of a hill, under a tree, or in a grove. Few and fragmentary as are the notices of patriarchal worship, they lead to the conviction that, from the beginning, there was a place set apart as the sacred seat of the Divine Presence; and the evidence supplied by the Book of Exodus bears out the opinion, that among the Hebrews the same practice continued to the time of the exodus. A correct rendering of Genesis iii, 24, gives important information respecting the origin of this idea. "So he drove out the man. And he inhabited" (or "dwelt between") "THE cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden." Here was the first establishment of the Divine Presence upon earth after the fall; and here there can be little doubt this presence, connected as it was with cherubic figures and the infolding fire, the established symbols of the scheme of redemption, was accessible by the blood of animal sacrifice. This Divine residence was called "the face," and "the presence, of the Lord." Gen. iv, 14, 16. How, or in what manner, any place was invested with a special ascription of the Divine Presence after the deluge, is not known: but it is distinctly stated that Noah resumed the practice of sacrifice; and the account of this transaction proves that he proceeded in the selection of the offering upon established rules, and that his oblation was divinely accepted. The manner in which the approval of God was given, and the mode in which the blessing and command of God were communicated to Noah and his sons, are not stated, or it might cast important light upon this subject. When Abraham first entered Canaan, he built an altar to the Lord at Sichem, (Gen. xii, 6, 7;) but shortly afterward, when locating near Bethel, we are told that "there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord," verse 8. The language in the second case certainly means more than that used in the first. In each, an altar was built unto the Lord; but at Bethel more than this was done: he "called upon the name of the Lord." In considering the meaning of this language it will be necessary to remember that the father of the faithful had an establishment which must have resembled a populous village, more than a private family. Eight years afterward he had an armed band of three hundred and eighteen trained servants, all of whom had been born in his own house. He must therefore have traveled like an Arabian emir, surrounded by a great number of servants and dependents. What provision was made for the religious instruction and edification of this large number of people? Certainly their wants in these respects were not overlooked. "I know him," said the Lord, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Gen. xviii, 19. The terms, "shall keep the way of the Lord," appear to refer to an established mode of practice, or rule of life, of a religious character. And if so, when we read of Abraham's building an altar, and, in addition to the service which it required, of his calling upon the name of the Lord, the circumstance seems to intimate that this was a place of worship, not only for sacrifice, but in the way of religious teaching and prayer. This judgment is strengthened by the fact, that, after Abraham came back from Egypt, he returned to this place; and again it is said, "There Abraham called on the name of the Lord," Gen. xiii, 3, 4: all which appears to indicate that here was a place specially appointed for holy worship.

But, as we have already seen, the patriarchs not only had a place thus set apart for worship, but a still more select and sacred one, where the special presence of the Lord was supposed to dwell. Rebekah, in her distress, went there to inquire of the Lord, (Genesis xxv, 22,) and obtained a clear and explicit answer from the oracle. Another element of the religious institutions of those times is brought under our notice in the teraphim which Rachel took away from her father. These were undoubtedly small images, (probably imitations of the cherubim,) which had been used in connection with the patriarchal worship at Haran, and it is not improbable that they were there associated with an oracle similar to that which was consulted by Rebekah; for Laban was acquainted with special revelations of the Divine will. Gen. xxxi, 24-29.

The whole history of the exodus proves that all these ideas of a place of worship, a seat of the Divine Presence, a depository for sacred emblems of the patriarchal faith, and an oracle, were not only retained by the Israelites, but that they were likewise all united and developed in one particular locality,—the ante-Sinaitic tabernacle of the congregation. As reference must be made to this subject in connection with the Ark, Cherubim, Shekinah, and Urim and Thummim, it is not necessary at present to discuss it further.

NOTE 33, page 98.—*Cause of the Similarity between the Religious Institutions of the Hebrews and those of Heathen Nations.*

NUMEROUS points of similarity have been found to exist between the institutions and rites of the Levitical law, and the religious ceremonial of Gentile nations. This fact admits of no dispute: the points of coincidence are so many, and the likeness so exact, that it stands before us as one of the indisputable phenomena connected with the early history of the religion of mankind. But while the fact is admitted, the cause of it has called forth several conflicting opinions, which have been advocated by learned men with great zeal.

The first theory suggested as a means of accounting for this similarity, taught that the religion of the Jews was borrowed from that of the Gentiles. This hypothesis was maintained by Maimonides, Marsham, Spencer, and Warburton. The second mode recommended for accounting for this singular accordance of Hebraism with ancient Heathenism, alleges that the ceremonial of the Gentiles was borrowed from that of the Jews. This notion has been elaborately supported by Gale, Dickenson, Stillingfleet, and other eminent authors. The third is, that the ancient ceremonial of the Pagans, and the Levitical law of the Jews, were both derived in great measure from the early patriarchal ritual, which at one period was common to all the descendants of Noah. The Heathen nations perverted it to idolatry and superstition; the Jews received it in a new form, and with more solemn sanctions from Moses, who was divinely inspired to alter, reform, add to, or take away from it, as was most suitable to the genius of the people, the object of Providence, the customs of the surrounding nations, or the accomplishment of his various designs, as the Legislator and Judge of Israel. This theory is espoused by Calmet, defended by Faber, and supported by Townsend; and is, in our judgment, the only rational mode of solving the difficulty: it removes nearly every objection, and accounts for almost all the phenomena; and, in addition to the arguments urged in its support by its learned defenders, possesses this singular and important advantage,—that it derives increasing strength from the numerous researches and discoveries of modern times. While our sacred literature is daily accumulating knowledge from the stores of Egyptian and Oriental learning, in every instance we are furnished with evidence that the great primitive patriarchal

faith was the source from whence all Gentile religion, as well as the Mosaic institutions, drew their prominent elements and peculiarities.—*Kitto's Cyclop. Bibl. Lit.*, art. Cherubim; *Faber's Pagan Idolatry*, vol. iii, p. 647.

NOTE 34, page 98.—*The proper Division of the Decalogue.*

THIS sacred code is so expressly called "ten commandments," that no difference of opinion can be entertained as to the specific number of these laws. But the manner of their division and arrangement has not been decided with the same unanimity.

It may be here observed, that, although these commandments are called ten, they are not numbered in the original Scripture. No one is called first, second, or third. How they stood upon the two tables, is not declared; whether five were written upon each, or they were unequally divided. Philo-Judæus adopted the former notion; but he has not been extensively followed. The discussion of this question has led to the adoption of three different theories, which it will be necessary to notice.

The first is the arrangement of the Talmud, which gives this division: 1. "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage." 2. "Thou shalt have none other Gods beside me. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," &c. 3. "Thou shalt not take God's name in vain," &c. 4. "Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day," &c. 5. "Honor thy father and thy mother," &c. 6. "Thou shalt not kill." 7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." 8. "Thou shalt not steal." 9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness," &c. 10. "Thou shalt not covet," &c. This arrangement is supported by the Targum of Jonathan, Aben Ezra, and Maimonides; its antiquity is attested by the writings of Cyril of Jerusalem, and in modern times has found defenders in Peter Martyr and others.

The second division is that given by Origen. He maintains that the words, "I am the Lord thy God," &c., are no part of the commandments, and that the first should be read, "Thou shalt have no other Gods but me." The second, "Thou shalt not make to thyself an idol, or a likeness," &c. The third, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;" and thenceforward as in the Talmudical arrangement. An overwhelming weight of authority supports this version. The *pseudo*-Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Jerome, together with the eminent Jewish writers, Philo and Josephus, adopt this mode of division, and argue in its favor. The countenance of these Hebrew authorities is of the greatest consequence in a question of this kind. Josephus gives a copy of the Decalogue according to this arrangement.—*Antiquities*, lib. iii, 5, 5. This form of the commandments was adopted by the English Church at the Reformation.

There are, besides these, two other modes of dividing the Decalogue; which, being derived from the present form of the printed Hebrew text, are called *Masoretic* divisions. In the greater number of manuscripts and printed editions of the Hebrew Scriptures, the commandments are separated by a p or v , which mark the divisions in the smaller sections of the Hebrew. These marks are placed in the copy of the commandments given in Exodus, in such a manner, that the words which, in the division of Origen, make the first and second commandments, are here read as one; and, consequently, the second is, "Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain;" and so on, until the last, which is divided into two, thus: ninth, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house;" tenth, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," &c. This arrangement is found in the Trent Catechism, and may be regarded as the Roman Catholic form of the Decalogue. It was also adopted by Luther. It

is worthy of remark, that those who adopt this division have been accustomed to give the Decalogue very generally in an abridged form: thus, the first commandment in the Lutheran shorter Catechism is simply, "Thou shalt have no other Gods but me;" the second, "Thou shalt not take the name of thy God in vain;" the third, "Thou shalt sanctify the Sabbath day." A similar practice is followed by the Roman Catholics, although they, as well as the Lutherans, in their larger Catechisms, (as the Douay,) give them at full length. This practice has given rise to the charge made against those denominations, of leaving out the second commandment; and doubtless this is the practical result on the mind of the common people, who are thus prevented from having God's explicit command against the worship of images kept steadily before their mind; and yet it is not just to say, that this command is altogether blotted out by those religious denominations, but that it is concealed from those persons who have access only to their shorter Catechisms.

The second Masoretic division differs from the first only by a transposition in the words, which, according to the arrangement of Origen, makes the tenth commandment, and in this mode alters the ninth and tenth. This is done thus: ninth, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife;" tenth, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house," &c. This arrangement is based upon Deut. v, 21, and is zealously maintained by Augustine, and was followed by Bede, Peter Lombard, and the learned Sonntag. It is a curious circumstance, that the order of words in the tenth commandment, in the Septuagint version of Exodus xx, agrees with the Hebrew of Deuteronomy.

Without repeating the various arguments which have been given on this subject, it may be simply urged that no Masoretic notation can command approval in opposition to the united testimony of Philo and Josephus. According to these eminent authors, the second mode of division, or that adopted by Origen, was in their day the received division of the Jewish Church; the English Reformers, therefore, appear to have acted with sound judgment in introducing that form of the Decalogue into our Liturgy.—*Kitto's Cyclop. Bib. Lit.*, art. Decalogue.

NOTE 35, page 99.—*The Mosaic Tabernacle.*

If sufficient information for the purpose could be obtained, it would be very desirable to trace the relation which the tabernacle built by Moses, under the special direction of God, bore to that which was brought out of Egypt and used for sacred purposes by the Hebrews. It has been remarked that they were distinguished by different names. The ante-Sinaitic tabernacle is always called *oh'-hel*, "a tent;" the Mosaic one, formed according to the revelations of Sinai, *mish-kahn'*, "a habitation, a dwelling." Yet the former word is often used in respect of some part of the latter tabernacle, and sometimes as a general designation for it. This led Simon and Gesenius to conjecture that the term *oh'-hel* was intended to describe the external coating of the tent, and *mish-kahn'* to indicate its furniture; while Dr. Samuel Lee supposes the first term to refer to the whole tent, the second to the compartments into which it was divided. Passages of Scripture might easily be selected which would support both of these hypotheses. Thus, in favor of the first, there is the text, "The tent (*oh'-hel*) over the tabernacle" (*mish-kahn'*;) Exod. xxxvi, 14. And again: "And he spread abroad the tent (*oh'-hel*) over the tabernacle," (*mish-kahn'*;) (xl, 19;) while other texts appear to support the opinion of Dr. Lee. Thus: "Thou shalt set up the tabernacle (*mish-kahn'*) of the tent (*oh'-hel*) of the congregation: and thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony;" (Exod. xl, 2, 3;) and, "The tabernacle, (*mish-kahn'*), his tent, (*oh'-hel*), and his cover-

ing." Exod. xxxv, 11. If we may hazard a conjecture on this subject, it would be that both these theories are to some extent correct, but that neither of them fully exhibits the ideal signification of the terms, so as to show their application in this particular case. It seems that the first tabernacle was called *ōh'-hel'*, that being the common and ordinary name for a tent, and that the sacred and public character of this edifice was only shown by its being emphatically called "the tent," or "the tabernacle of the congregation;" but that when the Jewish theocracy was brought fully into operation, it became important to give a designation to the new tabernacle, more clearly expressive of its being the residence of Jehovah. It was therefore called *mish-kahn'*, (from שָׁחַן *shāh-chan'*, "to dwell,") in order to keep prominently before the public mind the great fact that this was the residence and seat of their God and their King. Parkhurst ("Hebrew Lexicon," p. 623, *note*) supposes that the occurrence of this term in Gen. iii, 24, indicates the existence of a tabernacle containing the cherubim, and the emblematic fire and glory which he imagines might have been preserved from the days of Adam until the exodus. However bold and extravagant this opinion of the learned Hebraist may appear, it seems to be an undoubted fact, that there was a local seat of the Divine Presence established at the beginning; and that, although perhaps subjected to several changes in its outward form and modifications of appearance, this was maintained throughout succeeding ages, until fixed in a glorious manner in the Mosaic tabernacle as a peculiar residence, when the fact was specially marked by the application of the term *mish-kahn*, "dwelling-place."

NOTE 36, page 102.—*The Cherubim.*

A CLEAR and complete exposition of the true form and character of the cherubim, would remove one of the greatest causes of perplexity and obscurity which rests upon the religion of the Old Testament. But for this sufficient data do not exist. All that can now be hoped, is a rational hypothesis based upon the general tenor of Scriptural facts, and harmonizing with the scope of revealed truth. Our views, to a certain extent, have been already laid before the public in a preceding volume; ("Patriarchal Age," pp. 143–148;) but the permanent prominence given to these figures throughout the Mosaic economy, renders a further development of the *rationale* of the cherubim quite necessary.

Amid all the obscurity which rests upon the subject, and the many conflicting opinions which it has called forth, one point seems to have been established: it is universally admitted that the cherubic figures had a symbolical meaning;—some ancient writers, and many of the Christian fathers, supposed them to have had both a physical and metaphysical object. Philo regarded them as signifying the two hemispheres, and the flaming sword the motion of the planets; and, strange as this opinion is, it has been favored by some modern writers, (LANDSEER'S "Sabæan Researches," p. 315,) who regard them as astronomical emblems. But this idea, with that of Irenæus, who thought them emblematical of the four elements, the four quarters of the globe, the four Gospels, and the four universal covenants; and the notion of Tertullian, that the cherubic figures, particularly the flaming sword, denoted the torrid zone; and others equally fanciful and absurd, are worthy of no serious regard.

The opinion of Hutchinson, that the cherubim were figurative emblems of the Trinity, has been already noticed, and reasons given for rejecting it.—*Patriarchal Age*, p. 169. Another hypothesis makes them symbolical of the chief ruling powers by which God carries on the operations of nature. As the heaven of heavens was typified by the holy of holies in the Levitical tabernacle, (Heb. ix, 3–12, 24–28,) this

system considers that the visible heavens may be typified by the holy place or the outer sanctuary; and finding, as its supporters imagine they do, the cherubim identified with the ærial firmament and its elements in such passages as the following, "He rode upon a *cherub*, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind;" (Psalm xviii, 10;) where, regarding the last clause as exegetical of the former, and by quoting other texts in a similar way, they suppose their fanciful conclusion to be sustained. We do not regard this scheme as deserving serious refutation, and therefore simply observe, that its utter absence of spirituality and religious import would of itself be sufficient to insure its rejection.

A third system considers the cherubim, from their being instituted immediately after the fall, as having particular reference to the redemption of man, and as intended to symbolize in some way the operations or results of the economy of grace.

In order to test the soundness of this opinion, it will be necessary to observe, first, the situation which the cherubim occupied in the holy sanctuary. They stood upon and were a part of the same substance with the golden lid of the ark, which has been usually called "the mercy-seat." But this rendering can only be given to the original by regarding it in a metaphorical sense. But in this case care should be taken not to extend the signification beyond the warrant of Holy Scripture: in it we have a sure guide. The word used in the Septuagint and the New Testament to translate this expression is *ἱλαστήριον*, "the expiatory or propitiatory;" which application is justified and explained by reference to the custom of the high priest once a year entering the most holy place, and sprinkling the lid of the ark with the blood of an expiatory victim, whereby "he made atonement for the sins of the people." It was this solemn act which gave such prominence to the lid of the ark, and entitled it to separate and special notice. But this at the same time shows "that 'mercy-seat' is not a good or correct rendering of the idea involved in the metaphorical sense of the original Hebrew, and still less of the Greek. It carries the idea a stage farther from the original. The lid of the ark was no doubt the 'seat of mercy,' but it was mercy conferred through the act of expiation, and therefore a name bringing the sense nearer to the idea of expiation or propitiation would be more exact."

It was here, on this place of propitiation, and identified specially with it, so as to make any alteration of position impossible, that the cherubim were found, while the out-beamings of the Divine Presence shone upon them from above. Keeping this fact in our view, let us follow the Scriptural reference to the cherubim. When the temple was built, no alteration was made in the ark, which, with its emblematic figures, was removed to its new position in the same state. But, in addition to these, Solomon made two colossal cherubim, which stood with outstretched wings against the inner end of the most holy place, the ark with its cherubim being placed between these, and under their wings. Ezekiel's vision gives further information respecting these figures, and the description in the Apocalypse completes the account. In this case it is sufficiently obvious that reference is made to the same figures. Ezekiel knew that the forms he saw were the cherubim: and although John does not use the word, his description so exactly agrees with that of the prophet, that no one can doubt that the living creatures of the apostle (most improperly rendered "beasts" in our version) are the same with the cherubim of Ezekiel. It seems equally certain that, throughout the whole range of Scripture, these symbolical figures or creatures were used in the same sense, and under the same general law. Not only is there no intimation given of any alteration in the ideal meaning of these figurative appearances, but, on the contrary, we are taught that these things were an "example and shadow of heavenly things," and that Christ as our high priest should enter into heaven as into a better tabernacle, purifying the heavenly

things with a better sacrifice, and thus showing that these earthly figures and rites were "patterns of things in the heavens." Heb. viii, 9. If, then, we follow the inspired author of the Apocalypse into these celestial regions, we see a glorious throne raised: and round about the throne were four and twenty elders, (*presbyters*,) and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four living creatures. These are so described as to identify them with the cherubim. These living creatures and elders pour forth ceaseless ascriptions of holiness, glory, and honor unto God Almighty. Rev. iv. But when the Lamb which stood in the midst of the throne "as it had been slain," had taken the sealed book from Him who sat upon the throne, then the living creatures and elders "sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. v. With this text before us, can a doubt remain as to the symbolical import of the cherubic figures? They were not angels, nor emblems of angelic powers. Angels could not sing this song! This is the language of the redeemed: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood." What, then, did these cherubic figures symbolize? Certainly the whole body of the redeemed. This is stated in clear terms: they were redeemed out of "every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," and consequently out of every age. That they were not emblematic of angel powers, is proved by the fact, that angels are distinctly spoken of in the same vision, and they joined with the cherubim and elders in singing another song, (v, 11, 12,) in which ascriptions of praise and glory were offered to the Lamb, in language applicable to all intelligent creatures.

Let this solution of the symbolic character of the cherubim, namely, that they were intended to prefigure the whole body of those who, by faith in the appointed Saviour, obtained salvation through his atonement, be applied to the several principal cases in which they occur, and the result be carefully observed. We begin with the tabernacle. Here the cherubim are found upon the propitiatory,—in the holiest place under the effulgence of the Divine Presence, over the place where the blood of sprinkling was from time to time applied. In these circumstances, to think of powers of nature seems almost profane; to refer to angels is to bring in spectators where principles are alone concerned. But what can be more appropriate than that the subjects of redemption should appear in this place, where God dwelt, and the law rested, and the atonement was applied? Here, on the place of propitiation, arising out of, and deriving their existence from it, these symbolical representatives of the saved show how fully the atonement avails for sin, and that it places them in the light of the Divine countenance. So in Eden, when man had sinned and was expelled from the garden, and had no further access unto God as an innocent creature, this way of life was opened, and by the blood of sacrifice he was taught the way of access unto God. And in the case of Ezekiel, what can give greater point to the vision than to admit that when the Divine Presence left the devoted temple it was accompanied by the symbolic representatives of the faithful? (See *Kitto's Cyclopædia*, art. *Cherubim* and *Mercy-seat*; *Faber's Pagan Idolatry*, vol. iii, p. 635; *Hale's Analysis*, 8vo. ed., vol. iii, p. 587.)

NOTE 37, page 102.—*The Shekinah*.

THE Hebrew term שְׁכִינָה applied by the ancient Jews to the visible symbol of the Divine Presence, does not in this precise form appear in the original Scriptures; but it is a direct derivative from שָׁחַן *shāh-chen'*, "to dwell," "to dwell in a tent or

tabernacle," which is of frequent occurrence in the sacred writers, and is used mainly to imply the tabernacled presence and residence of the Most High by a visible symbol among the chosen people. Though found in several connections where the sense of *secular* habitation is obvious, yet there can be no doubt that the dominant idea is that of *sacred* indwelling, of which the following passages afford striking specimens:—Exodus xxv, 8: "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may *dwell* (שכנתי) among them." Exodus xxix, 45: "And I will *dwell* (שכנתי) among the children of Israel, and will be their God." Num. v, 3: "That they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I *dwell* (שכנתי)." Psalm lxviii, 16: "This is the hill which God desireth to *dwell in*; yea, the Lord will *dwell in it* (ישכן) forever." Psalm lxxiv, 2: "Remember—this Mount Zion, wherein thou hast *dwelt* (שכנת)." It is more especially employed when the Lord is said to "cause his name to dwell," implying the stated visible manifestation of his presence. Ezra vi, 12: "And the God that hath *caused his name to dwell there*," (שכן שמה) literally, "hath shekinized his name," compare Deut. xii, 11; xiv, 23; xvi, 6; xxvi, 2. It is emphatically employed in speaking of the cloud of the Divine Glory dwelling upon Mount Sinai. Exodus xxiv, 16: "And the glory of the Lord *abode* (ישכן) upon Mount Sinai." The term *Shekinah* שכ"ן is defined by Buxtorf (*Lex. Tal.*, *voc.* שכ"ן) as meaning primarily "habitation" or "inhabitation," but as having a dominant reference to the Divine Glory in its outward visible manifestation.

It is difficult to speak of the precise nature of the phenomenon thus exhibited. "We can only say that it appears to have been a concentrated glowing brightness, a preternatural splendor, an effulgent something, which was appropriately expressed by the term 'glory;' but whether in philosophical strictness it was material or immaterial, it is probably impossible to determine."

As this was not the first visible display of the glory of Jehovah, it becomes interesting and important to trace its previous manifestation. The first time Jehovah revealed himself in this manner was, perhaps, when the fallen pair "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden." Gen. iii, 8. Undoubtedly an appearance similar to the shekinah of the tabernacle was displayed at Eden, when the Lord God "drove out the man: he inhabited or dwelt between (shekinized) the cherubims at the east of the garden of Eden, and the fierce fire infolding itself to preserve the way of the tree of life." Gen. iii, 24. How long this appearance continued, or when it was first renewed after the flood, we cannot tell; but there can be little doubt that Abraham was favored with a vision of Jehovah in this manner. The language of Stephen would of itself imply as much: "The God of *glory* appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia." Acts vii, 2. It seems, therefore, that Abraham was called to leave his father's house, as Moses was to return to Egypt, by a vision of the shekinah. The father of the faithful had other similar revelations. When he received the covenant of circumcision, the appearance was so glorious that he "fell on his face, and God talked with him;" and on the occasion of his memorable intercession for Sodom, after "the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom, Abraham stood yet before the Lord." Gen. xvii, 1-3; xviii, 22. *Patrick*. When Moses, therefore, saw the glorious flame in the bush at Sinai, strange as was the sight, it was only a return of that special Divine Presence which had been manifested at the beginning, and with which his fathers had been favored.

But the display of this glory in the tabernacle was permanent. As the sanctuary was called not merely a tent, but *mish-kahn*, a "dwelling," so this manifestation of Jehovah was not a visit, but a *residence*. This was one of the highest privileges of this dispensation; and hence the apostle, in his enumeration of the prerogatives of the elected people, says, "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and *the glory*, and

the covenants, and the giving of the law," &c. Rom. ix, 4. (See *Lowman on the Shekinah*; *Kitto's Cyclopædia*; *Hale's Chronology*, vol. ii, p. 24; and *Patrick's Commentary*.)

NOTE 38, page 105.—*The Levitical Priesthood.*

THE appointment of this priesthood by the special and immediate command of God, constituted one of the most remarkable and important institutions of the Hebrew dispensation. By the erection of the tabernacle, Jehovah had prepared his dwelling-place; in the glorious shekinah, he had taken possession of it; and by this priesthood, he appointed his ministers, and prescribed the times and manner in which they should have access unto him. This privilege was enjoyed by all the priests, who, in their regular course, went twice every day into the holy place to perform the service of the sanctuary. No other individual might presume to enter this palace of the great King. But on one day in every year, the high priest was permitted to enter into the inner sanctuary,—the holy of holies. Here he sprinkled the blood of atonement on the propitiatory, and stood in the immediate presence of the shekinah of God.

In comparison with any religious distinction previously experienced by fallen man, the Jewish priesthood appears before us invested with paramount dignity and privilege. Their appointment to this sacred office by God's command, their privilege of access unto him, their duty to pronounce the divine blessing upon the assembled worshipers, and especially their being an evident living type of the great Redeemer,—all this attested the dignity of this sacerdotal institution.

NOTE 39, page 107.—*The Urim and Thummim.*

THE words *Urim* and *Thummim* may be rendered "lights and perfections," or, "the shining and the perfect." The Septuagint reading of Exodus xxviii, 30, is, "Thou shalt put the Manifestation and the Truth on the oracle of judgment; and it shall be on the breast of Aaron, when he goes into the holy place before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgments of the children of Israel on his breast before the Lord continually." (*Sir L. C. L. Brunton's Translation*.) But this language does not cast much light upon the nature of this remarkable gift, which still remains shrouded in great obscurity, both in respect of what it was, and also as to the manner in which it was used. A brief examination of the principal opinions which have been put forth on this difficult subject, will afford the best information respecting it.

Some have supposed that the terms "Urim and Thummim" are used in reference to the gems on which the names of the tribes were engraved, and should be understood as specifying the quality and purity of these precious stones. To support this notion, it is urged that when these terms are employed the stones are not mentioned, and *vice versa*. As, for instance, in Exodus xxxix, 10–21, there is no mention of the Urim and Thummim, although the passage contains a very particular account of the breastplate; while in Leviticus viii, 8, these words are found, and the gems are not mentioned. But to this it seems a sufficient answer to state, that the first-named text describes the curious works wrought by Bazaleel and Aholibah; while the other applies to the investiture of Aaron after all those things had been made. In the former, therefore, the Urim is not named, because it was not made by these cunning workmen; in the latter, the stones are not particularized, because the term "breastplate" was a specific name for the entire article, including the cloth, the gold, and the gems. In fact, this apparent discrepancy arises from the exactitude of Scripture language, in stating so precisely what was done by Moses, and what by the workmen.

A second opinion, and one which has obtained extensive currency and credit, is, that the Urim and Thummim were two small images of the two virtues or powers, and that these were placed in a pouch, or kind of pocket, in the breastplate, and gave oracular answers to the questions propounded by the high priest. This notion was gravely put forth by Philo Judæus, and has been frequently advocated by later writers. But to this also there appears to be an insuperable objection. That in a religion, the first principle of which condemned and reprobated all images, and every pretended material likeness of Deity, there should have been *images* appointed to give oracular replies, which were imbued with the prescience of God, and clothed with the authority of his name, is utterly incredible. The notion is therefore, as Dr. Spencer says of it, "a Talmudical camel which no one that is in his wits can ever swallow."

A third doctrine entertained on this subject makes the Urim and Thummim to consist in a peculiar radiance, or shining light, with which certain of the letters engraved on the high priest's breastplate were invested when a question had been put; so that these luminous characters being arranged gave the answer to the inquiry. This idea has the express sanction of Josephus. But here, again, there are insurmountable obstacles to our receiving the solution offered by the Jewish historian.

It may be freely admitted that some answers are recorded to have been given by Urim which might have been communicated by this means. When, for instance, after the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the Lord, saying, "Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?" the answer was, "Judah shall go up." Judges i, 1, 2. Now it would in this case be regarded as a sufficient answer, if the word "Judah" on the breastplate stood out with a bright shining light. And so, when David inquired whether he should "go up into any of the cities of Judah," the response was, יָלֵךְ, "Go up." 2 Sam. ii, 1. This might also have been indicated by the lustre of these letters. But in other cases this mode could not have possibly given a reply. An instance of this is found in 2 Samuel v, 23, 24, where the explicit and detailed directions communicated could not by any possibility have been represented by all the letters in the breastplate. But, besides this, in the greater number of cases, we have, on this theory, an insuperable difficulty in the correct adjustment of the letters. When the answer consisted of several words, admitting the letters giving the reply to stand out with a bright light, how were they to be arranged? Which was to be read first, and which last? No other answer has been given to this difficulty, than that the high priest was enabled to do this under the influence of the plenary spirit of prophecy. But it will be evident that this solution is utterly inadmissible; for, if we have to fall back on the communication of the prophetic spirit to the high priest, the Urim and Thummim is thereby quite superseded; for this would be sufficient of itself to give any answer, or to solve any difficulty. This theory is therefore, when fairly tested, found to be unworthy of confidence.

There is yet another opinion on this subject. Jahn and Michaëlis regard the Urim and Thummim as a sacred lot. They suppose it probable that three stones were used, on one of which was engraved יָהּ, "Yes," on another אֵין, "No," the third having no inscription; and that the question was always so put that if any reply were vouchsafed, it might be given by a simple negative or affirmative. But the Urim and Thummim, the glory of that glorious dispensation, must have been something more than a common lot. It is impossible that the answers recorded in Scripture, and which have been already referred to, could have been thus given.

Amid all this conflict of opinion, it seems sufficiently evident that the responses were given in audible voice from the holy oracle, and that the breastplate, bearing as it did the names of the twelve tribes, invested the high priest with his true repre-

sentative character, and thus enabled him successfully to ask counsel of God. (See Prideaux's Connection, Ann. 534; Kitto's Cyclopaedia, art. *Urim*; Michaëlis's Commentary, art. 315; Jahn's Archæologia, art. 369; Jennings's Jewish Antiquities, pp. 156-162; Calmet's Dictionary, *sub voce*.)

NOTE 40, page 114.—*Harmony of the Mosaic Laws.*

For the purpose of affording a condensed view of the institutions of the Hebrew religion, we transcribe the following

HARMONY OF THE MOSAIC LAW,

ARRANGED UNDER PROPER HEADS, WITH REFERENCES TO THE SEVERAL PARTS OF THE PENTATEUCH, WHERE THE RESPECTIVE LAWS OCCUR. FROM A MANUSCRIPT IN THE LIBRARY OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S COLLEGE, PRESENTED BY ARCHBISHOP LAUD.

THE FIRST CLASS.

THE MORAL LAW, WRITTEN ON THE TWO TABLES, CONTAINING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The First Table, which includes	Exodus, chap.	Leviticus, chap.	Numbers, chap.	Deuteron. chap.
The first commandment	20. 13.	....	....	5, 6.
The second commandment ...	20. 23. 34.	19. 26. 18.	....	{ 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. 11, 12, 13. 5, 6. 10.
The third commandment	20, 23.	....	....	5.
The fourth commandment	{ 20. 23. 31. 34, 35.	19. 23. 26.		
The Second Table, which includes				
The fifth commandment	20. 22.	19.	....	5.
The sixth commandment	20.	19.	....	5.
The seventh commandment ...	20.	18, 19.	....	5. 23.
The eighth commandment	20. 22.	19.	....	5.
The ninth commandment	20. 23.	19.	....	5.
The tenth commandment	20.	....	....	5.
The sum of both tables .....	....	19.	....	6.

THE SECOND CLASS.

THE CEREMONIAL LAW.

Of the holy place	20.	17.	....	12.
Of the matter and structure of the tabernacle	{ 25, 26, 27. 35.			
Of the instruments of the same, viz.,				
Of the laver of brass	30.			
The altar of burnt-offerings ...	27.			
The altar of incense	30.			
The candlestick of pure gold ..	25.			
The table of show-bread	25, 26.			
The ark	25, 26.			
Of the priests and their vest- ments, for Glory and Beauty	28.			

	Exodus, chap.	Leviticus, chap.	Numbers, chap.	Deuteron. chap.
Of the choosing of the Levites.	....	....	18. 3. 8.	
Of the priests' office in general.	....	....	3. 18.	
Of their office in teaching.....	....	19. 10.	....	{ 18. 12. 17. 31.
Of their office in blessing .....	....	....	6.	
Of their office in offering; which function, largely spreading it- self, is divided into these heads:—				
What the sacrifices ought to be	....	22.	....	15. 17.
Of the continual fire.....	....	6.		
Of the manner of the burnt- offerings.....	....	6, 7.		
Of the manner of the peace- offerings.....	....	3. 7.		
Of the manner of the sacrifices, according to their several kinds, viz.,				
For sin committed through ig- norance of the law.....	....	4.	5.	
For sin committed through ig- norance of the fact .....	....	5. 7.		
For sin committed wittingly, yet not through impiety ....	....	6.	5.	
The special law of sacrifices for sin .....	....	6, 7.		
Of things belonging to the sac- rifices .....	....	2. 6. 7.	15.	
Of the show-bread .....	....	24.		
Of the lamps.....	27.	24.	8	
Of the sweet incense	30.			
Of the use of ordinary oblations, whereof there were several kinds observed by the priests:				
Of the consecration of the high priest, and other priests.....	29, 30.	6. 8.		
Of the consecration and office of the Levites .....	....	....	8.	
Of the dwellings of the Levites	....	....	35.	
Of the anointing of the altar, and all the instruments of the tabernacle	29, 30.			
Of the continual daily sacrifice	29.	....	28.	
Of the continual Sabbath-day's sacrifice .....	....	....	28.	
Of the solemn sacrifices for feast-days, which were divers, and had peculiar rites, distin- guished into these chapters, viz.,				

	Exodus, chap.	Leviticus, chap.	Numbers, chap.	Deuteron. chap.
Of trumpets.....	....	....	10.	
Of kalends, or beginnings of months.....	....	....	28.	
Of the three most solemn feasts in general	23. 34.	23.	....	16.
Of the feast of passover	{ 12, 13. 23. } 34.	23.	9. 28.	16.
Of the feast of pentecost	23, 34.	23.	28.	16.
Of the feast of tabernacles.....	23. 34.	23.	29.	16.
Of the feast of blowing the trum- pets .....	....	23.	29.	
Of the feast of expiation.....	30.	16. 13.	29.	
Of first-fruits.....	22, 23. 34.	2.	15.	26.
Of tithes.....	....	21.	18.	12. 14. 26.
Of fruits growing, and not eaten of .....	....	19.		
Of the first-born	13. 22. 34.	....	....	15.
Of the Sabbatical year.....	23.	25.		
Of the year of jubilee.....	....	25.		
Of vows in general.....	....	27.	30.	13.
What persons ought not to make vows.....	....	....	30.	
What things cannot be vowed.	....	27.	....	23.
Of redemption of vows .....	....	27.		
Of the vows of the Nazarites ..	....	....	6.	
Of the laws proper for the priests, viz.,				
Of pollutions.....	....	22.		
Of the high priest's mourning..	....	21.		
Of his marriage.. ..	....	21.		
Of the mourning of the ordinary priests .....	....	21.		
Of their marriage.....	....	21.		
Of their being forbidden the use of wine, &c. ....	....	10.		
Of sanctified meats .....	....	{ 6. 17. 19. } 22.	5. 18.	12. 15. 18.
Of the office of the Levites :—				
In teaching.....	....	....	....	17. 27. 31.
In offering.....	....	....	3. 4. 18.	10.
Other promiscuous ceremonial laws —				
Of uncleanness in general.....	....	15. 19.	5.	
Of uncleanness in meats, viz.,				
Of blood.. .. Gen. 9	26.	7. 17. 10.	....	12.
Of fat.. ..	....	3. 7.		
Of dead carcasses	22.	17.	....	14.
Other meats, and divers kinds of living creatures.....	....	11. 20.	....	14.
Of uncleanness in the issue of seed and blood .....	....	15. 12.	....	23.

	Exodus, chap.	Leviticus, chap.	Numbers, chap.	Deuteron. chap.
In the dead bodies of men	19.	
In the leprosy.....	13, 14.	5.	24.
Of circumcision..... Gen. 17	12.		
Of the water of expiation	9.	
Of the mourning of the Israel- ites	19.	....	14.
Of mixtures.....	19.	....	22.
Of their garments; and writing the law privately.....	15.	6. 11. 22.
Of young birds not to be taken with the dam.....	22.
Of their paddle-staves	23.

THE THIRD CLASS.

THE POLITICAL LAW.

The magistrate is the keeper of the precepts of both tables, and to have respect to human society; therefore the POLITICAL LAWS of the Israelites are referred to both the tables, and are to be reduced to the several precepts of

THE MORAL LAW.

Laws referred to the First Table; namely,

I. *To the First and Second Commandments, viz.,*

	Exodus, chap.	Leviticus, chap.	Numbers, chap.	Deuteron. chap.
Of idolaters and apostates.....	22.	20.	....	13. 17.
Of abolishing idolatry	23. 24	....	33.	7. 12.
Of diviners and false prophets..	22.	19. 20.	....	18.
Of covenants with other gods .	23. 34.	7.

II. *To the Third Commandment, viz.,*

Of blasphemies.....	24.	15.
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III. *To the Fourth Commandment, viz.,*

Of breaking the Sabbath.....	31. 35.	15.
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Political Laws referred to the Second Table; namely,

I. *To the Fifth Commandment, viz.,*

Of magistrates, and their au- thority	18. 30.	....	11.	{ 1. 16, 17. 23.
Of the power of fathers.....				
	21.	20.	....	21.

II. *To the Sixth Commandment, viz.,*

Of capital punishments in gene- ral.....	....	....	....	21. 24.
Of willful murder.....	21.	24.	35.	19.
Of manslaughter, unwittingly committed; and of the cities of refuge.....	21.	....	35.	19. 21. 22.

	Exodus, chap.	Leviticus, chap.	Numbers, chap.	Deuteron. chap.
Of heinous injury.....	21.	24.	....	25.
Of punishments, not capital ...	....	....	....	25.
Of the law of war .....	....	....	....	20. 23.

III. *To the Seventh Commandment, viz.,*

Of unlawful marriages.....	....	18. 20.	....	7. 22.
Of fornication .....	....	19.	....	23.
Of whoredom	22.	21.	....	22.
Of adultery and jealousy .....	....	19, 20.	5.	22.
Of copulation against nature ..	22.	18. 20.		
Of divorcements.....	....	....	....	24.
Other matrimonial laws ...	21.	18. 20.	....	{ 21, 22. 24. 25.

IV. *To the Eighth Commandment, viz.,*

Of the punishments of thefts...	22.	....	5.	
Of sacrilege	Joshua 7			
Of not injuring strangers.....	22. 23.	19.	....	10.
Of not defrauding hirelings....	....	19.	....	26. 25
Of just weights.....	....	19.	....	25.
Of removing the landmark....	....	....	....	19.
Of lost goods	22.			
Of stray cattle.....	22, 23.	....	....	22.
Of corrupted judgments	23.	19.	....	16. 24
Of fire, breaking out by chance	22.			
Of men-stealing .....	....	....	....	24.
Of the fugitive servant.....	....	....	....	23.
Of gathering fruits.....	....	19. 23.	....	23, 24.
Of contracts, viz.,				
Of borrowing.....	....	....	....	15.
Of the pledge	22.	....	....	24.
Of usury	22.	25.	....	23.
Of selling.....	21.	25.	....	15.
Of a thing lent	22.			
Of a thing committed to be kept	22.			
Of heirs .....	....	....	{ 26, 27. 33, 36. }	21.

V. *To the Ninth Commandment, viz.,*

Of witnesses .....	....	5.	....	17. 19.
The establishing of the political law .....	....	....	....	4.
The establishing of the divine law in general.....	{	{	{	{ 6. 11. 29. 30. 31.
From the dignity of the lawgiver	....	19, 20. 22.	15.	{ 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. 10. 26, 27.
From the excellency of the laws	....	....	....	4. 26,

	Exodus, chap.	Leviticus, chap.	Numbers, chap.	Deuteron. chap.
From the promises.....	{ 15. 19. 23. 24. }	18. 26.	....	{ 4, 5, 6, 7. 10, 11. 12, 28.
From the threatenings.....	23.	26.	....	{ 4. 7. 11. 27. 28, 29, 30.

Critica Biblica.

NOTE 41, page 129.—*The Grounds on which the Hebrews claimed a Right to Palestine.*

THE learned Michaëlis contends that the Israelites claimed the possession of this land as a matter of right, because "Palestine had, from time immemorial, been a land of Hebrew herdsmen, and the Israelites, who had never abandoned their right to it, claimed it again of the Canaanites, as unlawful possessors." (*Commentaries*, vol. i, art. xxxi.) Without going at length into the professor's argument, we may satisfy ourselves by insisting on two facts which we regard as decisive. First. The ancestors of the Israelites did not claim prior or exclusive possession of Palestine in respect of the Canaanites. On the contrary, Moses is careful to inform us that, at the time of Abraham's sojourn there, "the Canaanites were then in the land." Gen. xii, 6; xiii, 7. If priority of occupation, therefore, has any weight, it evidently belonged to the Canaanites. Abraham, it is freely admitted, traveled through the country entirely independent of the petty princes or kings of Palestine; but it is equally true that he and his sons dwelt here "as in a strange country, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims." Heb. xi, 9-13. In fact, the whole scope of the apostle's argument is based on the circumstance that Abraham and his sons had no inheritance in Canaan. And, Secondly, In exact accordance with this fact, not only did Abraham not claim exclusive possession of the country, but he acknowledged that this right belonged to the Canaanites. No more convincing proof of this can be required than that which is furnished by the fact of his buying the field of Machpelah. If he regarded his right to any part of the soil as equal to theirs, why did he say to the sons of Heth?—"I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight." Gen. xxiii, 4. But it may be asked, "On what principle, then, can the conduct of the Israelites be justified? Or, by what authority did they invade Canaan, and destroy its inhabitants?" The reply is simple and explicit: The land was given them by God; and given them, not only that the Divine purpose respecting them might be accomplished, but also as a just punishment of the sins of the Canaanites. Hence the reason given for the delay which took place was this: "The iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full." Gen. xv, 16. This Divine gift was the warrant for the invasion of the land; and the means by which possession was obtained were suitable and commensurate. Not only was the martial power of the Israelites unequal to the task, but in every stage of the war God proved, by repeated miraculous interpositions, that this was not simply a conflict between nations in the ordinary sense, but a just punishment inflicted by Divine Justice on a wicked people. There is therefore really no more difficulty in reconciling the destruction of the Canaanites with the Divine Goodness, nor, in fact, so much, as meets us in the destruction of Lisbon or of Catania by earthquakes. This was strikingly shown in the events which happened to the Israelites immediately after the fall of Jericho.

NOTE 42, page 130.—*The Gibeonites.*

It is a very remarkable fact, that those apparently trivial and accidental circumstances which are found in connection with this portion of the history of the Hebrews, are, when considered in their connection and results, of the highest importance. Such is the case with this historical incident respecting the Gibeonites. The Israelites were prone to forget God, to throw off the authority of his law; oft-repeated miraculous interposition became therefore necessary, in order to preserve in the public mind a knowledge of Jehovah, and a remembrance of that covenant-favor by which he gave them possession of Canaan. Nor is it easy to conceive of any event or circumstance, which could be made so prominent and permanent a memorial of the mighty interposition of God on behalf of the Hebrew people, as was this subjection of the Gibeonites. Through all succeeding generations, as long as any descendant of this Canaanitish tribe remained as a servile attendant on the sanctuary, so long would the Israelites have before them a living proof of the early history of their nation as recorded in their sacred books; a standing demonstration of the miraculous interposition by which the nation was planted, and grew up into power. Just as the Jews at this day present a perpetual proof of the truth of Holy Scripture to Gentile nations; so did the servitude of the Gibeonites attest to the Hebrews the authenticity of their early history, and establish the great fact of their covenant relation to Jehovah.

NOTE 43, page 131.—*The miraculous Hail-stones.*

SPECULATIONS, more curious than either reasonable or useful, have been raised respecting the nature of these "stones,"—whether they were real stones, or hail. As large stony substances have been known to fall from the clouds on many occasions, and in various parts of the world, it has been contended that the miracle recorded here consisted in the showering down of such stones upon the routed Canaanites. This does not, however, appear probable. Neither sacred nor profane history contains any account of such a fall of meteoric stones as would be fatal to an army. Although, in a miracle like this, it may be thought unreasonable to look for any precedent to aid us in its explanation, it is important to consider that the miraculous interpositions of God in behalf of his people were usually effected with the least possible disturbance of the ordinary operations of nature; and therefore, as in the explanation of holy writ it is not allowable to interpose a miracle unless the text clearly and unequivocally demands it, so the nature and extent of the miraculous action ought not to be unnecessarily magnified. If the narrative before us be considered under the guidance of this sound principle, it will be found to teach that an extraordinary and miraculous fall of hail was made so destructive to the enemies of Israel, that a greater number perished from this cause than by the sword.

The soundness of this interpretation is confirmed by the fact, that the destructive character of the agency is ascribed to the size of the stones,—“great stones.” Now, if meteoric substances had been meant, this term would have been improper; for the average size of those stones has not been in any way determined: and so would it have been unnecessary; for stones of this kind, of whatever size, falling from a great height, would be sufficiently destructive. But this term, which, on any other hypothesis, is purely expletive, becomes full of meaning, if an extraordinary fall of hail was intended; for, in that case, it would be highly necessary to mention the great size of the stones in order to account for the fatal effects which they produced. That this instrument might occasion such destruction, is proved by the fact, that the plague of hail was one of the most ruinous of the inflictions on Egypt.

NOTE 44, page 132.—*The Miracle of Joshua.*

SCARCELY any fact related in Holy Scripture has attracted more attention, or given rise to greater diversity of opinion, than this. If the authorized English version of this passage may be taken as a faithful exponent of the sacred text, then we have here a plain account of a very stupendous miracle, wrought by the immediate power of Jehovah, at the supplication of his servant, for the deliverance of Israel and the total destruction of their enemies. But this is doubted, or denied; and it is alleged that this interpretation of the sacred writer not only gives a very improbable narrative, but that it contains statements philosophically false.

It becomes necessary, therefore, to look carefully at the whole case, and endeavor to understand the true import of the account. The facts are indisputable. Joshua, while at Gilgal, received a message from the Gibeonites, who had so craftily induced him to make a league with them, stating that the kings of the Amorites had gathered their forces together against Gibeon, and imploring him to come to their rescue. Joshua x, 6. Joshua perceived the importance of saving this large and strong town from falling into the hands of his enemies; so he "ascended from Gilgal;" this is literally correct; for, in the course of this march, he would have to cross the high ridge of hills which ran from north to south through the centre of the country. Joshua would therefore have to ascend continually from the plains of Jericho, until he had passed Gibeon, and attained the summit near Ramah. Here he would be close upon Gibeon, which lay just below on the west side. With this advantage of ground, and assured of victory by special revelation from Jehovah, Joshua suddenly assailed the combined army of the Amorites, who, terrified and broken by this unexpected assault, gave way, and fled down the valley which runs to the north of Gibeon westward, toward Beth-horon. At this point, the Lord fought for Israel by showering down great hail-stones upon the Amorites; so that greater numbers perished from this cause than from the sword. In the midst of this successful conflict, Joshua is represented as speaking unto the Lord in the sight of all Israel, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon;" and we are told, "The sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies;" and again, that "there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel." Verses 12-14.

Now where is the improbability of this account, even upon the supposition that the sun and moon were arrested in their course? It is objected that the occasion did not justify a miracle. Yet a miracle was certainly wrought; for no critical torture can prevent the text from saying, "There has been no day like unto that, either before it or after it, as to the Lord's hearkening to the voice of a man; for the Lord himself fought for Israel." This is the version given by a scholar, who rejects the authorized reading, and disbelieves that the course of the sun was affected. Yet how does this reading obviate the difficulty? We are told, "By the Lord's fighting for Israel;" but, then, this was in answer to the prayer of his servant, and to such an extent as rendered this day more remarkable in the annals of the world than any other. It must therefore have been a miraculous interposition of the highest order; and, consequently, nothing is gained. Those who object to the generally received sense of the passage, must be called upon to remember that it stands in a sacred record of the marvelous interpositions of God in behalf of his elected people; and they must admit that it makes this day pre-eminent for some great interposition; and before they can hope to set aside the meaning which Jewish antiquity, as well as the whole body of Christian divines, (with very few exceptions,) have seen in this text, they must find a sense which will justify this remarkable

encomium, which, amid the records of Moses and Elijah, of Isaiah and Daniel, shall make this day, on account of the answer granted to the prayer of Joshua, in some essential particular, without a precedent in the whole of the Divine administration; for there "has been no day like unto that before it or after it."

But if the words of the text do not teach us that the relative position of the sun with respect to the earth was for awhile supernaturally fixed, so as to produce an elongation of the day, what was the object of Joshua's address? And why did he refer to the sun and moon at all? Those who take the view to which we object, say that, in an address to the Israelites, the Hebrew leader apostrophizes the sun, declaring that he should not go down until he had witnessed their triumph over the Canaanites; and that, when it is said, "The sun stood still," it is meant that, being in the meridian, his slight apparent motion made scarcely any perceptible difference in the position of shadows! In proof of this, we are told that the ancient Jews regarded the sun as stationary from half-past eleven to half-past twelve every day! And this mode of interpretation is supposed to rescue the narrative from difficulty! But, to receive this emendation, we must believe that, in the midst of a desperate conflict, when the cause of Israel required the extermination of the foe which had just at this time given way before the arms of Israel and the miraculous hail-storm,—Joshua, amid all the tumult of battle, proceeds to harangue his men; and in the course of his speech makes a poetical allusion to the sun, as staying to witness their triumph; and that afterward, when the conflict is over, and Joshua, laying aside the sword of the general for the pen of the historian, and narrating the events of this wonderful day, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, writes, "So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven,"—he means to teach all posterity, that the apparent motion of the sun is scarcely perceptible, and that shadows do not change much for about an hour at mid-day! Those who regard this as freeing the text from difficulty, and the narrative from improbability, may adopt it; on our own mind it has the very opposite effect.

But it is said that this account, taken in the usual sense of language, is unphilosophical and incorrect. This has been often urged, and is frequently admitted. Yet it does not appear to be certain, even if no further explanation could be offered. At the crisis of the conflict Joshua saw the moon sinking in the west over the valley of Ajalon, while the sun stood over Gibeon farther east: knowing that darkness would cover the retreat of his enemies, he prayed to Jehovah, and implored that these luminaries might retain these relative positions with respect to the earth. This was the spirit of the address, and the language in which it was enunciated was popular, but appropriate; and the word prevailed, the sun and moon retained these relative positions. And as nothing could be more out of place on such an occasion than scientific niceties, even if Joshua had known them, the language seems to be suitable and correct.

But a critical attention to the original terms removes this alleged difficulty. That the grammatical sense of the Hebrew words fully bears out the authorized translation in teaching the cessation of the apparent motion of the sun, is admitted by those who are most opposed to this interpretation. One of these observes, "As to our passage, its poetical character would, in the first place, seem to us to demand the rendering 'to stand still;' and that, in the second place, this rendering is linguistically admissible, appears from the Book of Joshua itself; for, chap. x, 13, the verb *נָחַם* 'to cease doing,' 'to arrest a peculiar course,' 'to stand still,' (Gen. xxix, 35; xxx, 9; 1 Sam. xx, 38; Hab. iii, 11,) 'to stand fast,' 'to remain immovable,' (Psalm xxxiii, 9, 11, &c.,) is used as a substitute for *נָחַם*, and the identical meaning of both terms, therefore, is clearly proved."—*Journal of Sacred Literature*, No. V, p. 145. But, while the proper application of these terms to the cessation of motion is thus fully

admitted, it must be shown that the ideal meaning of *dāh-mam* goes beyond this. Dr. Lee explains it by "was dumb, silent, quiet, inactive;" and hence Dr. Clarke observes, "The terms in this command are worthy of particular note: Joshua does not say to the sun, 'Stand still,' as if he had conceived *him* to be *running his race round the earth*; but, 'Be silent,' or *inactive*; that is, as I understand it, 'Restrain thy influence; no longer act upon the earth, to cause it to revolve round its axis;' a mode of speech which is certainly consistent with the strictest astronomical knowledge; and the writer of the account, whether Joshua himself, or the author of the Book of Jasher, in relating the consequence of this command, is equally accurate, using a word widely different when he speaks of the *effect* the retention of the solar influence had on the moon; in the first case the sun was *silent*, or *inactive*, דָּחַם *dom*; in the latter, the moon *stood still*, אָמַד *amad*. The standing still of the moon, or its continuance above the horizon, would be the natural effect of the cessation of the solar influence, which obliged the earth to discontinue her diurnal rotation, which, of course, would arrest the moon: and thus both it and the sun were kept above the horizon, probably for the space of a whole day.

"Persons who are no friends to Divine revelation, say, 'that the account given of this miracle supposes the *earth* to be in the *centre* of the system, and the sun movable; and, as this is demonstrably a false philosophy, consequently, the history was never dictated by the Spirit of truth.' Others, in answer, say, 'that the Holy Spirit condescends to accommodate himself to the apprehensions of the vulgar. The Israelites would naturally have imagined that Joshua was deranged, had he bid the *earth stand still*, which, they grant, would have been the most accurate and philosophical mode of command on this occasion.' But, with due deference both to *objectors* and *defenders*, I must assert, that such a form of speech on such an occasion would have been utterly *unphilosophic*; and that the expressions found in the text are such as Sir Isaac Newton himself might have denominated, everything considered, elegant, correct, and sublime. Nor does it at all appear, that the *prejudices of the vulgar* were considered on this occasion; nor is there a word here, when properly understood, that is inconsistent with the purest axiom of the soundest philosophy; and certainly nothing that implies any contradiction. I grant, that when people have to do with astronomical and philosophical matters, then the terms of science may be accommodated to their apprehensions: it is on this ground that Sir Isaac Newton himself speaks of the *rising* and *setting of the sun*, though all genuine philosophers know that these *appearances* are produced by the rotation of the *earth* on its own axis, from west to east. But, when matters of this kind are to be transacted between *God* and his *prophets*, as in the above case, then subjects relative to philosophy are conceived in their proper terms, and expressed according to their own nature.

"It is vain to cry out, and say, 'Such a cessation of motion in one planet could not take place without disordering all the rest.' This I deny; and those who assert it, neither know the *Scripture* nor the *power of God*: therefore, they do greatly err. That the day was preternaturally lengthened, is a Scripture fact. That it was so by a miracle, is asserted; and whether that miracle was wrought *as above stated*, is a matter of little consequence; the thing is a Scripture fact, whether we know the *modus operandi* or not. I need scarcely add, that the *command of Joshua to the sun* is to be understood as a prayer to God, (from whom the sun derived his being and his continuance,) that the effect might be what is expressed in the command; and therefore it is said, verse 14, that 'THE LORD HEARKENED TO THE VOICE OF A MAN, for the Lord fought for Israel.'"—*Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary, Joshua x.*

From a careful examination of the whole case, it therefore appears, that, whatever difficulties may be found to exist in this part of the narrative, they are by no means

obviated or diminished by adopting a rationalistic mode of interpretation; that, in fact, the miraculous agency, so plainly asserted in the authorized translation, must be admitted, in order to obtain the true sense of the sacred narrative.

NOTE 45, page 135.—*Two Tribes of Amorites expelled by the Hornets.*

THIS portion of Scripture deserves very serious attention. The words communicated through Moses express, in clear and unambiguous terms, a promise that the Lord would, by means of annoying and destructive insects, actually compel some of the inhabitants of Canaan to emigrate to other lands. And what was thus prophetically promised is, by the words of Joshua, declared to have been fully effected. The veteran leader of Israel, in his last address to the people, when reminding them of the faithfulness of Jehovah, and of the mighty interpositions of his power in their behalf, refers to the expulsion of two kings of the Amorites, by the agency of the hornet, without the aid of Hebrew arms, as a well-known and fully recognized fact. According to the Jewish commentaries of R. Nachman, one of these nations "was the Girgashites, who retired into Africa, fearing the power of God." And Procopius, in his History of the Vandals, mentions an ancient inscription, in Mauritania Tingitana, stating, "We are Canaanites flying from the face of Joshua, the son of Nun, the robber." Whatever importance may be attached to these statements, it is certain that the Girgashites are included in the list of the seven devoted nations, either to be driven out or destroyed by the Israelites. Gen. xv, 20, 21; Deut. vii, 1; Joshua iii, 10; xxiv, 11. It is also a fact, that the name of this people is not found in the enumeration of those nations which were to be utterly destroyed, (Deut. xx, 17,) although the other six are specially set forth; nor does it occur among the names of those among whom, in disobedience to the Divine command, the Israelites lived and intermarried. So that, while the sacred text says that two tribes were driven out by the hornet, and African tradition alleges that one of these, at least, found refuge in the country around the Phenician colony of Carthage, Jewish tradition defines the people thus expelled as the Girgashites; and all this appears to be confirmed by the fact, that, although this was one of the doomed nations, it does not appear to have been entirely destroyed, nor yet to have remained in the land.

The hornet, which is spoken of as the instrument by which the expulsion of this people was effected, although in size not much larger than a bee, is said to be a most destructive creature, capable of inflicting severe injury, even on the rhinoceros and the elephant, and of destroying the smaller animals, not excepting the camel, whose skin is so hard and well defended with hair. The vindictive power that presided over this dreadful scourge was worshiped, at Ekron, through fear, (the reigning motive of Pagan superstition,) under the title of Baal-zebub, "Master of the Hornet." It is not improbable that this idolatry arose at the time of the expulsion of the Girgashites, and among the neighboring tribes, under a dread of being visited with a similar calamity.—(See Hales's Chronology, vol. ii, pp. 263–265.)

NOTE 46, page 145.—*Relative Chronology of the War with Benjamin.*

ALTHOUGH these events are related in the latter part of the Book of Judges, we are fully warranted in placing their occurrence soon after the death of Joshua. The following (among other) reasons justify this course:—1. When these events occurred, the tribe of Dan had not obtained a settled location. 2. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, was alive at the time of the battle of Gibeah. (Judges xx, 28.) 3. The wickedness at Gibeah is spoken of as the first open iniquity of Israel. Hosea x, 9.

NOTE 47, page 146.—*Extent of the Authority of the Judges.*

It is a question which has been scarcely touched by biblical critics, but which is nevertheless of great importance to a clear understanding of this part of sacred history, how far these several subjugations, and the authority of the several judges who obtained deliverance for Israel, extended. When, for instance, we are told that this eastern king was "served" by "the children of Israel," are we to understand that his tyranny extended from Dan to Beersheba? There does not appear to be any ground for such an opinion. It seems very unreasonable to suppose, that his authority could have reached those Hebrews who dwelt among the Philistines and Amorites of the west, or the Canaanites and Sidonians of the north. On the contrary, it may be taken as an undoubted fact, that the whole land which had been promised to Israel, was never brought completely under one government before the time of David. The several servitudes, therefore, must be regarded as affecting in succession various important portions of the land, and, consequently, the corresponding tribes of Israel by which these were occupied. Cusha-rishathaim, therefore, may be regarded as having subdued the Israelites who dwelt in the districts east of the Jordan, and, probably, also, some who occupied the western banks of that river.

NOTE 48, page 148.—*The House of Heber.*

THE case of Jael affords information respecting some important circumstances in the history and manners of this period. Moses informs us, that when Jethro, his father-in-law, and other members of the family, visited him in the wilderness, he entreated Hobab, the son of Jethro, to accompany the Israelites in their journey. Hobab at first refused, and Moses repeated his request with still greater urgency; but the sacred narrative does not state whether the son of Jethro was prevailed upon to accompany Moses, or still persisted in his refusal. The former seems to be rather implied; for the history proceeds immediately to say, "And *they* departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey," &c. Num. x, 29-33. But the question which is thus left uncertain by Moses, is, by the narration of the victory of Deborah and Barak, clearly and fully solved. We are here told, that Heber, the Kenite, who was descended from Jethro, dwelt at this time in "the plain of Zaanaim, which is by Kedesh." Judges iv, 11. This fact removes all doubt as to the conduct of Hobab, and shows that he accompanied the Israelites in their journey; and that, although his family were kept entirely distinct and separate from the descendants of Jacob, they took up their residence in the land of Canaan.

But this incident also casts light upon the manners and civil polity of this age. It shows that this branch of the Kenite family, after their location in Palestine, still adhered to their primitive nomadic manner of life: they lived in tents. And the circumstance of Sisera's seeking concealment in the tent of the wife of Heber, shows that the patriarchal mode of life, which made this place one of perfect privacy and seclusion, still prevailed.

It is further worthy of remark, that the house of Heber was regarded as of sufficient importance to be exempted from the impending or existing collision between Jabin and the children of Israel; "for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite." Judges iv, 17.

NOTE 49, page 168.—*The Sin and Punishment of Beth-shemesh.*

THERE can be no doubt that this sin consisted in the prying curiosity of these persons; who had forgotten that these sacred things were in the immediate care of God, and that, being consecrated to him, it was profane in them to doubt his protecting

care; and still more so, to open the holy ark. The principal difficulty in this passage, however, is the statement given in the authorized version respecting the number of men slain on this occasion: "Even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men." 1 Sam. vi, 19. The improbability that so large a number of men as is here specified could have been slain out of the population of a small country town, has been admitted on all hands; and various ingenious efforts have been made to make the text speak some other meaning. Bochart proposed to insert the preposition *מִן*, "out of;" and thus to read, "seventy men, (to wit,) fifty out of a thousand." Le Clerc proposes the same unauthorized addition in another place; thus rendering the text, "Seventy men out of fifty thousand." Bishop Patrick adopts Bochart's rendering, as most "reasonable." Kennicott gives a literal translation of the Hebrew text, thus: "And he smote among the men of Beth-shemesh, because they looked into the ark of Jehovah; even he smote among the people SEVENTY MEN, FIFTY THOUSAND MEN." This learned Hebraist, in a very lengthened argument, seems to show, that of these two numbers one is an interpolation: it will be perceived, they are not joined by a conjunction, as would be "absolutely necessary, in order to make of the two one sum total." And, having inferred that one of these numbers has been erroneously inserted into the text, he concludes, as fifty thousand appears to be a very improbable number, that "seventy" was the correct reading.

In support of this it is urged, that Josephus has precisely this number: "But the anger and indignation of God pursued them; so that he slew seventy men of the village of Beth-shemesh."—*Antiquities*, lib. vi, cap. i, sect. 4. A similar number is found in the sacred text in an old manuscript of particular excellence, between five and six hundred years old, in the University of Oxford; which has, "He smote among the people seventy men, and the people lamented." Nor is this the only instance in which old manuscripts retain the number seventy, omitting entirely the fifty thousand.

But what appears decisive as to the meaning of the text, is the fact that, after recording this destruction, the sacred writer proceeds to say, that "the people lamented," and "the men of Beth-shemesh" sent a message to Kirjath-jearim. Now, if fifty thousand men had been slain, *the people* could not have remained, *the men* would not have been alive. The context, therefore, renders it indisputable, that the smaller number (seventy) was originally in the text alone, and gives the meaning of the sacred writer: in what manner the alteration was introduced, it is not necessary to decide.

NOTE 50, page 169.—*Samuel and the Philistines.*

It is not easy to define the exact import of this text. A few years after the event here recorded, we find the Philistines holding garrisons in the country, and exercising a tyranny so complete, that they permitted no smith to remain in all the land of Israel; but compelled the Hebrews to go to the country of the Philistines to obtain instruments of iron for agricultural purposes. When it is remembered that this took place in "the days of Samuel," it seems clear that the text under consideration cannot mean that the Philistines were driven out of the country, and exercised no more authority over Israel during the remainder of Samuel's life. Nor is it probable that the country was now perfectly delivered, and that the Philistines afterward made renewed aggressions upon it. The passage, as explained by the general course of the history, appears to teach us this,—that the cities of which the Philistines had taken possession during this irruption, were retaken by the Israelites after this miraculous victory; and that, although the Philistines held several posts in the country, and exercised authority over the Israelites who resided in those parts of

the land bordering upon Philistia, they never marched a hostile force into the land of Israel, nor attempted to revenge this defeat, or repair its consequences, during the whole of the time that Samuel discharged the duties of chief magistrate.

NOTE 51, page 169.—*The judicial Circuit of Samuel.*

FROM this statement it has been generally supposed that, while Samuel ordinarily heard causes and judged the people at his residence in Ramah, he went annually to the more important towns, in distant districts; that, by administering justice in the several parts of the country, disorder might be more effectually checked, and grievances more easily redressed. But when it is known that, while the length of the land of Israel, from Mount Hermon in the north, to Kadesh-Barnea in the south, was one hundred and eighty miles, and its average breadth about sixty-five miles; Bethel was but five miles from Ramah, Mizpeh less than four, and Gilgal about seventeen; it will be admitted that the object of the prophet in itinerating to those places could not have been for the purpose of placing the seat of judgment at the most convenient distance from the several great sections of the population.

Yet this appears to have been the opinion of Dr. Adam Clarke, who, on this text, says, "When he was at Bethel, the tribe of Ephraim and all the northern parts of the country could attend him; when at Gilgal, the tribe of Benjamin and those beyond Jordan might have easy access to him; and when at Mizpeh, he was within reach of Judah, Simeon, and Gad." But is it probable that Samuel would leave his home at Ramah, to go five miles to Bethel to judge the people there, for the convenience of the northern tribes, when the inhabitants of Dan would then be ninety miles distant? or, that he would remove his court four miles to Mizpeh, when there was then an inhabited territory extending forty miles farther to the south? Surely, if Judah and Gad could easily wait upon the prophet at Mizpeh, they might, without difficulty, have gone four miles farther to Ramah; and if Ephraim could come to Bethel, they might go five miles farther, to meet the judge at his home. It seems, therefore, that this circuit could not have been taken merely for the sake of placing the seat of judgment nearer the residence of the people; consequently, we must inquire whether this institution of Samuel cannot be accounted for on other grounds.

When it is remembered that Bethel was the scene of the most glorious revelations which were made by Jehovah to the founder of the Hebrew nation; that Gilgal was the first resting-place of the ark, and where the tabernacle was first raised after the passage of the Jordan; and that Mizpeh was the site selected for holding the most solemn assemblies of the people; it seems reasonable to conclude, that Samuel chose to fix his seat of judgment alternately at these places, that he might thus have an opportunity of recalling public attention to the most prominent and affecting facts in the history of the Hebrew people, and of enforcing on their mind the importance of their steady devotedness to the God of their fathers. (For the geography of Mizpeh, Gilgal, and Ramah, see Robinson and Wilson.)

NOTE 52, page 170.—*The Schools of the Prophets.*

THE origin and character of these schools are subjects which, notwithstanding the labor and learning that have been spent in their investigation, are still veiled in much obscurity. The prophetic office, as it existed under the Mosaic economy, was evidently designed to be a great and influential element in the theocracy. When the people rebelliously murmured against the administration of Moses, instead of strengthening the hands of his servant by larger temporal powers, as might have been done, God was pleased to meet the case by a religious provision; and seventy men were divinely inspired to uphold the authority of God and of his servant, by

speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit to the people. From this time this class of religious teachers was maintained; and even in the darkest periods of Hebrew history, God left not himself without inspired witnesses to the truth of his revelation, and the spirituality of his religion. But in what manner new members were added to the number of these extraordinary ministers, we are not informed. There can be no doubt that it was by special Divine appointment; but whether this was preceded by any particular training or education, is not told us until the time of Samuel.

During the administration of this inspired judge, we read of companies of prophets living together, and acting in concert, under the direction of Samuel, in a manner which has led to the universal conviction, that these several companies were so many schools of young men, taught and disciplined under the direction of Samuel, and other aged prophets who succeeded him; and that from these, ordinarily, (although not always,) the prophets were selected by God, through the communication to them of the gift of inspiration. Both the rule and the exception are proved in the account which Amos gives of himself: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos vii, 14, 15. This statement seems clearly to show, that prophets were usually selected from "the sons of the prophets," as these students were called; (see 2 Kings ii, 3, 5, 7, 15;) but that, in his case, the rule was not observed, he having been divinely called from his labors in the field.

But then the obvious difficulty presents itself, which is so well put by Stillingfleet: "It is hard to conceive what influence any antecedent and preparatory dispositions can have upon receiving the prophetic spirit." Without staying to notice the requisites insisted on by Jewish writers, the absurdity of most of which this learned author sufficiently exposes, we may refer to two, which he regarded as important,—the improvement of their natural faculties, and their advancement in piety; but to these another may be added,—a thorough acquaintance with the Mosaic law.

The first of these must have been important, in an age and country where means of instruction were very limited. It must then have been necessary that men intended to hold such a position, as extraordinary teachers of their countrymen, should themselves be rescued from gross ignorance, and be brought under the influence of real religion. The whole scope of the narrative goes to show that Samuel labored to supply this want.

But, if general instruction was necessary, it was still more important that the prophets should have ample and correct knowledge of those revelations which were given by God to Moses, as the basis of the national faith. If we may judge of the teaching of the prophets from the character of those portions which are preserved in the Scriptures, this point will be very clear. The writings of all the prophets constantly refer to the law: the institution of the order was certainly for the purpose of enforcing the spirit of the Mosaic covenant, and inducing a universal obedience to its requirements. It must, therefore, have been necessary, that those men who were to sustain this office should be well instructed in the law of Moses. (Calmet on the Schools of the Hebrews, in the *Journal of Sacred Literature* for January, 1843. See also Stillingfleet's *Origines Sacre*, vol. i, p. 191; and Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, vol. ii, p. 122.)

NOTE 53, page 170.—*The Cause of Hebrew Monarchy.*

MANY reasons have been assigned for this great change in the political constitution of the Hebrews. Some have said that it was occasioned by the importance which

was now attached to Palestine by the great kingdoms of Assyria and Egypt; others, that it was the result of the inconveniences found inseparable from the irregular government of the judges; while a third class, supposing that the Israelites had, since their location in Palestine, consolidated their institutions, and risen in their national character and power, speak of this change as "incident to the progress of society." However agreeable these views may be to the popular taste, we regard them as utterly groundless. There may be some truth in each of the premises; but neither of them separately, nor all united, formed the great reason for the establishment of monarchy. This is to be found in the necessity which, under the theocracy, existed for national piety, in order to national power. Faithful to God, one should "chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." But, when "they provoked him to jealousy with strange gods," then "the sword without, and terror within," destroyed them. Deut. xxxii, 30, 16, 25.

While the elders of Israel lamented their political weakness and national prostration, two ways opened before them as means to an improvement in public affairs. The first invited them to give their hearts to God, and, uniting their influence and exertions to the efforts of the prophet, to aim at a perfect restoration of Hebrew prosperity and power, by means of a thorough revival of their religion: the other was, to pass by the peculiar claims and privileges of the theocracy, and to fall back upon the principles and policy of other nations. Unhappily for Israel and the world, the latter was adopted; and hence, when the prophet lamented over this decision before God, the Lord said, "They have not rejected *thee*, but they have rejected *me*." 1 Sam. viii, 7.

In consequence of this, the world never saw the theocracy in action, as it was divinely intended to operate. Unfaithful to their glorious vocation, the Hebrews chose an earthly head, and placed that trust in their king and their sword which should have been centred in "the God of Jeshurun." But it is objected that Moses foresaw this change, and pointed out the character which the king would manifest, and gave directions for the guidance of his conduct. But this prophecy does not prove that the establishment of monarchy was originally a part of the Divine purpose. Moses also predicted the captivity and dispersion of Israel; but, as in the case of the appointment of a king, these prophecies were conditional; and nothing but the unfaithfulness and iniquity of Israel produced the certain accomplishment of these predictions.

NOTE 54, page 174.—*The Threat of Nahash.*

THE excessive and apparently unmeaning character of this cruelty has excited considerable attention. It has appeared improbable, if the haughty Ammonite had been disposed to maim the men of Jabesh-Gilead, that he might lay it for a reproach upon all Israel, that he should select their right eyes for destruction. But ancient authors afford ample explanation of the difficulty. Theodoret says, "He that exposes his shield to the enemy with his left hand, thereby hides his left eye, and looks at the enemy with his right eye: he, therefore, that plucks out that eye makes men useless in war." And this was the object and practice of Nahash; for Josephus informs us that "he put out the right eyes of those that either delivered themselves to him upon terms, or were taken by him in war; and this he did, that, when their left eyes were covered by their shields, they might be wholly useless in war." (*Antiquities*, book vi, chap. v, sect. 1.)

This shows the object of the threatening, and proves that the infliction was intended not only as a great reproach and a perpetual badge of slavery, but also as an effectual means of preventing them from ever after revenging the injury, or asserting their independence.

NOTE 55, page 175.—*Public and private anointing of Kings.*

It is remarkable that in the case of David this double anointing was punctiliously complete. At the first, he was anointed as the successor of Saul; (1 Samuel xvi, 1-3, 13;) and this ceremony was therefore a private appointment to the whole kingdom of the Hebrew people. After the death of Saul, upon being invited to reign over Judah, he was publicly anointed as king over that tribe. 2 Sam. ii, 4. Seven years afterward, when Ishbosheth was dead, the adhesion of the eleven tribes gave David the government of the whole nation: he was then publicly anointed "king over Israel." 2 Sam. v, 3. Thus the public ceremony performed at two several times completed his acknowledged inauguration to all that dominion to which he had been privately appointed.

NOTE 56, page 178.—*Difficulties in the Scriptural Narrative of David's Entrance on his public Career.*

THE difficulties contained in this part of the sacred history are very great. The narrative, as it now stands in our authorized English version, is so contradictory, that all attempts to explain and reconcile the conflicting elements have utterly failed. We have, for instance, an account of Saul's mental malady, and of David's being sent for to play before him. 1 Sam. xvi, 14-23. This circumstance led Saul to communicate repeatedly with Jesse; and his partiality for David became so great, that he desired to retain him permanently about his person, and raised him to be his armor-bearer. And yet, immediately afterward, David is spoken of as at home, feeding his father's sheep; and, what is still more extraordinary, when sent by his father to carry provision to his brethren in the army, and induced by the bravado of Goliath to offer to fight that giant, he is spoken of as utterly unknown to Saul and his attendants. And when, after the victory, David was presented to the king, Saul inquired the name of his father, and acted toward him as if he had never before had any knowledge of him or his family. These and other difficulties have been regarded as insuperable. To remove them, and restore consistency to the narrative, two alternative propositions have been suggested. First, it has been proposed to transpose the passage, 1 Samuel xvi, 14-23, from its present connection, and insert it between the ninth and tenth verses of the eighteenth chapter. This was recommended by Bishop Horsley, and is adopted by Mr. Townsend. The other proposition is to regard 1 Samuel xvii, 12-31, 41, 50, 55-58, as interpolations, and without authority. It must be freely admitted, that the latter course ought never to be resorted to except in a case of clear and strong necessity. Yet we are compelled to acknowledge that, after careful investigation, it is the solution of the difficulty to which the whole weight of evidence inevitably conducts us. Our limits will not allow an extended examination of this question; which, however, mainly rests upon the fact, that the passages referred to are not found in the Septuagint. All the copies of this ancient version, except the Alexandrine, omit them; and this copy has the principal passage inserted in a manner which proves that it was not in the text from which that copy was transcribed. The authority of the Septuagint is, therefore, decidedly in favor of regarding these sentences as interpolations.

In a case of this kind, perhaps the most satisfactory evidence is derived from the harmony of connection, and consecutive sense, which the narrative presents when the doubtful sentences are retained or omitted. In this respect nothing can be more complete than the proof of interpolation. In regard of the twenty verses of chapter xvii, if retained, they introduce matter not only irrelevant, but in direct

contradiction to the general scope of the narrative, while their omission makes no break in the sense. Verse 11: "When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid." Verse 32: "David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." "No connection can be more proper. David is represented as being, at that time, an attendant upon the king; and, when we had been told just before, (chap. xvi, 21,) that Saul had made him his armor-bearer, we might justly expect to find him with him, when the battle was set in array." The same propriety of connection is found in the narrative, when the other verses are omitted, and the whole history is thus rendered clear and consistent. (See Pilkington's Remarks upon several Passages of Scripture, sect. xiv; Kennicott's Second Dissertation, p. 418; and Dr. Adam Clarke, *in loco*.)

NOTE 57, page 184.—*The Apparition of Samuel.*

THIS part of the narrative has given rise to great difference of opinion, as authors have generally dealt with it according to their bias of mind, rather than by a fair induction from the facts detailed in the history. As it has for a long time been rather fashionable to decry all supernatural appearances, as an approximation to witchcraft; so it has been often contended, that the alleged raising of Samuel was a trick, an imposture. In proceeding to the investigation of this singular case, it may be proper to observe, that the inspired author of the Pentateuch did not regard witchcraft itself as a cheat or a trick. However wicked human commerce with evil spirits might be considered, it is always spoken of as real: the stringent laws which Moses delivered against witchcraft, divination, enchantment, and every similar practice, afford the clearest proof that the sin against which these were directed was not one of pretense and deception merely, but of deeper turpitude and greater guilt. Nor does it at all affect the case, to object that multitudes who professed these supernatural powers were impostors and false deceivers: the answer is, that the laws and history of the Hebrews demonstrate the possible existence of the crime. Nor is the argument of greater weight which rests upon the Scriptural declarations, that the efforts of diviners were utterly unavailing when opposed to the purpose of Jehovah. All satanic agency is permitted, and must always be regarded as subject to Divine control.

It does not appear, therefore, that there is any reason for our prejudging the narrative, by assuming the impossibility or extreme improbability of its ordinary and natural sense being the true meaning. In fact, it seems impossible to allow to Holy Scripture a strict definite sense, without coming to the conclusion which Dr. Adam Clarke has fully avowed, namely, "There is a possibility, by arts not strictly good, to evoke and have intercourse with spirits *not human*; and to employ in a certain limited way their power and influence."

A careful investigation of the whole account has led to the following, as a probable solution of the most debatable points. This person is truly represented as "a woman who had a familiar spirit;" literally, "mistress of the *Ohv*." This is the obvious scope of the narrative. All that has been surmised as to imposition or deception has been brought to the Scripture: there is no reference to anything of the kind, either directly stated or reasonably implied, in the language of the sacred writer. Nor does a critical inquiry into the grammatical import of the term here used weaken this impression, but the reverse; for, instead of referring to any appearance or pretense, it applies directly to the acting spirit. Parkhurst says, "On an attentive review, I think the singular *בַּחַיִּית* must, in the following texts, Lev. xx, 6; Deut. xviii, 11; 1 Sam. xxviii, 7, 8, denote 'the evil spirit himself,' the *εὐκαὶνός* *εὐκαὶνός*, 'spirit of divination,' as St. Luke calls him. Acts xvi, 16." Whatever

sacrifices Biblical scholars may, in this learned age, be called to make to the shrine of rationalism,—and the demands put forth are many and great,—it is certain that the New Testament text, to which the learned Hebraist refers, puts the general question beyond all doubt. The young woman at Philippi certainly held such intercourse with a demon as enabled her to make superhuman communications, which brought her masters much gain; and Paul miraculously broke off this connection, and put an end, in her case, to the exercise of this demon agency. This cannot be denied, if the New Testament writer is believed; and if this be true, on what grounds can the plain sense of Old Testament teaching be rejected, and a similar connection be denied in the case of the woman of Endor?

It further appears that Saul actually obtained his object; that he was not imposed upon or deceived, but did really converse with the spirit of the departed prophet. Notwithstanding the numerous objections which learned men have urged on this head, there does not seem to be any reasonable doubt as to the real appearance of Samuel. This fact is so evident from the whole narrative, that many who deny that the woman had any connection with demon agency freely admit it. And if those who talk of this appearance as being “a phantom,” or “some accomplice of the witch,” were to consider the difficulties attending such impersonation, they would speak in a less confident tone. Let the address of Samuel be carefully scrutinized, and let it be said whether any living man or evil spirit would give utterance to such language. Short as the speech is, it breathes the soul of the prophet. The reference to the past history is such as could scarcely have emanated from any mind but Samuel’s; while the prediction is precisely in his style and manner, and was fully verified. The entire annals of imposture do not furnish a case in which any person, as an accomplice of a low and wicked woman, conceived and delivered such an address as that of the prophet on this occasion. It is as easy to believe that some other individual personated Hannibal at Cannæ, and delivered the famous address to the Carthaginian army, as to admit that Samuel was represented by some wicked man or demon on this occasion. Mr. Faber has therefore well observed, that the address to Saul is “an oracle of woe, clear and explicit, and such as in the very nature of things no *uninspired* being could have delivered.”

But this question is completely set at rest by the sacred text, although, unfortunately, the point of the sentence is not given in the authorized translation. When the sacred writer said, “And Saul perceived that it was Samuel,” (1 Sam. xxviii, 14,) he wrote שְׁמוּאֵל הָיָה “Samuel *himself*,” the pronoun which so distinctly fixes the sense, and asserts in the most unqualified manner the actual presence of the spirit of the prophet, being entirely omitted in our translation. However, therefore, human sagacity may be puzzled, or rational skepticism object, the presence of Samuel on this occasion is clearly that which the Scripture teaches.

Lastly: it seems evident from the account, that the appearance of Samuel was quite unexpected by the woman, and consequently not effected by her power. The proceeding appears to have been this: Having heard the king’s request to bring up Samuel, she proceeded with her incantations, expecting, in all probability, such aid from the demon as would afford an appearance in the character of the person expected; but unusual and unexpected results immediately followed. God miraculously interposed, and the prophet appeared, while her spiritual agent could do no more than reveal the dignity of her visitor. This accounts for the woman’s cry of astonishment, her knowledge of Saul, and also for the actual appearance of the spirit of the departed seer; a work far beyond the power of the Pythoness and all her spiritual associates. (See Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature, art. *Witchcraft*; Faber’s Origin of Pagan Idolatry, vol. iii, p. 349; Michaëlis’s Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, art. 254.)

NOTE 58, page 192.—*The Treason of Absalom.*

FROM the sacred text in 2 Sam. xv, 1-12, it would appear that *forty* years were employed in preparing and carrying out these treasonable purposes of Absalom. And as this could not have been the meaning of the writer, various attempts have been made to bring the text, verse 7, into an accordance with the history. These efforts have resulted in two propositions, each of which has received the countenance of very eminent men.

The first proposal is an emendation of the text, it being contended that *four* is the correct reading, and that this word should be inserted instead of *forty*. This is supported by the Syriac, Arabic, several MSS. of the Vulgate, the Gothic Latin MS., and some others. This number is also given by Josephus and Theodoret, and is supported by Bishops Horsley, Kennicott, and Russell, Dr. Hales, and Dr. Clarke.

On the other hand, many eminent critics prefer retaining the term “*forty*,” and in order to reconcile this to the history, they suppose the computation to commence from the anointing of David by Samuel. This opinion is maintained by Patrick, Usher, Lightfoot, and Townsend, who rest their case mainly upon the sufficiency of explanation which it gives, and the absence of any warrant for an alteration of the text.

In such a contest of authority, and collision of great names, it may be difficult to come to a decision; but here the preponderance seems to be in favor of regarding “*four*” as the correct reading, instead of “*forty*.” With great disinclination to admit emendations of the sacred text, except when absolutely demanded, such emendation appears necessary in a case like this, when the present reading in its ordinary sense cannot be correct. The great objection to retain the “*forty*,” arises from the arbitrary character of the proposed era. Most modern critics who adopt this view say, the period should begin when Samuel anointed David: but why? Neither the text, nor the scope of the history, affords any other answer than that this will just meet the requirements of the case. Hence the Talmudists, in *Seder Olam* and other books, will have these forty years to commence from the time that the Israelites asked a king to reign over them. And Abarbanel is, after all, of opinion, that the plainest sense is, after forty years of David’s reign. It seems, therefore, most reasonable to attribute the insertion of “*forty*” instead of “*four*” to an error in transcribing the text.

NOTE 59, page 195.—*The Slaughter of the Gibeonites, and its Punishment.*

THIS part of the Scripture history has given rise to violently conflicting opinions. One class of writers, resting their remarks on the barbarity of the immolation here described, labor to persuade us that the whole case was a contrivance of the priesthood to rid David of dangerous rivals. Others, with equal zeal, endeavor to explain away all the difficulty of the case, by referring it to the absolute sovereignty of God, who has an undoubted right to take away the lives of his creatures when and by what means he pleases. Neither of these theories offers a satisfactory solution of this difficult passage.

The first of these opinions impugns the integrity of Holy Scripture. If what is distinctly declared to be an oracular answer from Jehovah is assumed to be a priestly forgery, we know not where to draw the line of distinction, or how to sustain the verity of the sacred record. On the other hand, although the principle asserted is perfectly sound, as an abstract doctrine, the application of it to this case is utterly repugnant to the spirit of revealed truth, which does not place the lives of

unoffending men at the capricious disposal of others, and then regard those thus wantonly sacrificed as an acceptable immolation to Jehovah.

How, then, is the difficulty so apparent in the passage to be removed? It may appear very unlearned, and be an unsatisfactory conclusion; but we can only say that this chapter presents so many points of disagreement with the general tenor of Scripture history, that we cannot pretend to give any accurate exposition of the events which it narrates. The result of careful and extended inquiry and research may be well expressed in the words of Dr. Adam Clarke: "Till I get further light on the subject, I am led to conclude, that the whole chapter is not now what it would be, coming from the pen of an inspired writer; and that this part of the Jewish records has suffered much from rabbinical glosses, alterations, and additions."

NOTE 60, page 195.—*The Sin of numbering the People.*

It is a singular fact, that no critic or commentator pretends to be able to say with certainty wherein the sin of David in this transaction consisted, or what it was. That it was well understood at the time, is very evident from the narrative; indeed, we cannot account for the omission of a specific description of the transgression, but on the supposition that it was so fully understood by all the parties interested at the time, that it was not thought necessary to chronicle its particular character. Our limits forbid an enumeration of the many opinions which have obtained on this subject: we merely observe that many reasons have been urged, for the purpose of showing that David was led to this numbering of the people by a proud desire to blazon forth the extent of his power, and the number of his subjects. Others have thought that the payment of a half shekel each as a poll-tax to the sanctuary was imperative, whenever the number of the people was taken. There are objections of great weight against both these opinions, which induce us to regard them as untenable; and although we can scarcely consider the question as settled, we regard Michaëlis as having afforded the best exposition of the difficulty which has been given. He says, "As far as I can understand the story, David caused the people to be numbered, neither out of that prudent solicitude which will always actuate a good king, nor yet out of mere curiosity, but that by means of such a census they might be enrolled for permanent military service, and to form a standing army; the many successful wars he had already carried on having filled his mind with the spirit of conquest. We find at least that the enumeration was ordered to be carried on, not, as had before been usual, by the priests, but by Joab and the other generals; and the very term here used, סָפַר *saphar*, *numeravit*, *scripsit*, includes also in itself the idea of numbering for military service, and is, without any addition, equivalent to our German military term *enrolliren*, 'to enrol or muster.' This, indeed, is so much the case, that *ha-sopher*, סֹפֵר 'the scribe,' is that general who keeps the muster-rolls, and marks those called on to serve. In like manner the officers are termed סֹפְרֵי *sophorim*, 'scribes.' David's sin, therefore, or rather, not to speak so theologically, but more in the language of politics, his injustice and tyranny towards a people who had subjected themselves to him on very different terms, and with the reservation of many liberties, consisted in this. Hitherto the ancient and natural rule of nations, *Quot cives, tot milites*, had certainly been so far valid as that, in cases of necessity, every citizen was obliged to bear arms in defense of the state. Such emergencies, however, occurred but very rarely; and at other times, every Israelite was not obliged to become a soldier, and in peace, for instance, or even during a war, not very urgent, subject himself to military discipline. David had made a regulation that, exclusive of his life-guards, 24,000 men should be on duty every month by turns; so that there were always 288,000 trained to arms within the year;

which was certainly sufficient for the defense of the country, and for commanding respect from the neighboring nations, especially considering the state of the times, and the advantages in point of situation which David's dominions enjoyed. It would appear, however, that he did not think this enough. Agitated, in all probability, by the desire of conquest, he aspired at the establishment of a military government, such as was that of Rome in after-times, and at subjecting, with that view, the whole people to martial regulations; that so every man might be duly enrolled to serve under such and such generals and officers, and be obliged to perform military duty at stated periods, in order to acquire the use of arms."—*Michaelis's Commentaries*.

An ingenious writer has supposed that, on this occasion, David was led into the great antichristian sin of attributing to himself the predictions relating to the Messiah, and that his numbering was the first overt act taken with a view to his establishing the kingdom of Shiloh. As evidence that some thoughts of this kind occupied the mind of the king, his words have been quoted, "Keep back thy servant also from *presumptuous* sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from *the great transgression*." Psalm xix, 13. "For a moment," says our author, "the spirit of Antichrist, that *man* of sin, appeared to be revealed; and already had Michael the prince stood up to vindicate his own principality, and his sword was extended over the glorious holy mountain, appearing between heaven and earth, with the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of the chief messenger. However, the hour was not yet come, neither had the evil taken root; but the diabolical illusion passed away from the sound heart of the king, like the fumes of midnight intemperance from a strong man's head." *Nimrod*, vol. ii, p. 45.

NOTE 61, page 206.—*Solomon's Marriage with Pharaoh's Daughter*.

THIS marriage is frequently spoken of as having been clearly contrary to the Mosaic law. Although we are not disposed to deny the possibility of this, the subject appears to be a very doubtful one. The texts usually referred to, as prohibiting such alliances, (Exodus xxxiv, 16; Deut. vii, 3, 4,) do not clearly apply to the case, as their terms are specifically limited by the context to the several Canaanitish nations which occupied Palestine. With these the Israelites were prohibited from forming any alliances; but this law did not extend to Gentile nations living at a distance, as is fully proved in the case of the Gibeonites. The object of this law, as well as its terms, renders the application of it to distant Gentiles very doubtful. It was specially intended to guard the Hebrews against intermarriage with a people who were, by the judgment of God, doomed either to be driven out or destroyed, and with whom matrimonial connections, from the proximity of their idolatrous rites, would have been most dangerous.

It is a remarkable fact in the case of Solomon, that when, through the influence of his wives, he was led into the foulest idolatry, although the idols which he worshiped are carefully and repeatedly enumerated, the gods of Egypt are never reckoned among them.

NOTE 62, page 215.—*Ships of Tarshish*.

THIS commercial navigation was such an important element in the means by which the Hebrew nation attained to the zenith of wealth and prosperity, that every particular connected with it has been regarded with great interest, and investigated with much ingenuity and industry; and none more so than the account of the navy by which it was effected. These ships have indeed been invested with very peculiar importance by being associated in the sacred record with Tarshish, the name of a

place or country with which the Tyrians carried on an extensive trade. The most natural course of proceeding, therefore, is, first to ascertain the locality of Tarshish. This has been regarded as a difficult problem in Scriptural geography. A reference to a few passages of Scripture will cast some light upon this obscure subject. The first time the term occurs is in the genealogical table of the earliest nations. Gen. x, 4, 5. It is here placed among the sons of Javan: "Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim." This primitive notice would lead us to seek for the place somewhere on the north coast of the Mediterranean sea. "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents." Psalm lxxii, 10. Isaiah confirms this impression: "I will send those that escape of them unto the nations," (or Gentiles,) "to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off." Chap. lxvi, 19. Again: Ezekiel bears equally important testimony, although he only speaks of the commerce carried on with this port. Speaking of Tyre, and connecting this place with Javan and Tubal, he says, "Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs." Chap. xxvii, 12. When it is known that Pliny says, "Nearly all Spain abounds in the metals,—lead, iron, copper, silver, and gold," and that "tin" was brought by Phenician navigators from Britain to that country, and thence transhipped to the East, we can scarcely hesitate to place Tarshish somewhere on the Spanish peninsula. Heeren fully confirms this view; shows from Strabo, that the Phenicians not only traded with Spain and Britain, but actually conducted mining operations in the former country; and is so fully satisfied of the identity of Tarshish and Spain, that he translates the phrase which we render "ships of Tarshish" by "vessels from Spain." Chap. iii. If it be necessary to add further evidence in proof of this point, we may observe, 1. That vessels bound for Tarshish sailed from Joppa. This is proved in the case of Jonah. Tarshish must therefore have been somewhere on or near the coast of the Mediterranean. 2. In Spain we have a place called Tartessus, which rendered into Hebrew would be identical with Tarshish, and, in the absence of conflicting evidence, would be sufficient to settle the question. 3. It is an undoubted historical fact, that Spain was not only a place to which the Tyrians traded, but was one of the chief seats of Phenician colonization.

This proof would be regarded as perfect, had not the Scriptures, in connection with this commercial enterprise of Solomon, said that the ships went to Tarshish. It has been therefore regarded as an inevitable consequence, that if the navy from Ezion-geber sailed to Tarshish, that place could not be Spain; and if Spain was called by that name, there must be two places bearing this denomination. The difference found to exist between the record of this event as given in the Book of Kings, and that in the Chronicles, has attracted attention, and is worthy of particular notice.

<p>"For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish," &c. 1 Kings x, 22.</p>	<p>"For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram: every three years," &c. 2 Chron. ix, 21.</p>
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<p>"Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold," &c. 1 Kings xxii, 48.</p>	<p>"He (Jehoshaphat) joined himself with him, (the king of Israel,) to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-gaber," &c. 2 Chronicles xx, 36.</p>
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It will be seen here that in both instances the Book of Kings speaks of ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir, while the Chronicles do not call them ships of Tarshish, but say they went to that place.

The question which this comparison presents to the mind is simply this: Do these texts, taken together, teach that both Tarshish and Ophir were visited in this voyage, or is the discrepancy to be accounted for in any other way? As the whole tenor of Scripture places this commercial port in the west, and other circumstances identify it with Spain; and as we never find any other reference to a place of this name accessible from the Red Sea; the first of these alternative propositions seems untenable, and we are led to inquire whether any other reasonable mode can be found to remove the difficulty.

It is well known that, in all ages, different kinds of vessels have been distinguished by different names, according to the manner of their construction, or the purpose or trade for which they are intended. Thus we have merchantmen, as distinguished from ships of war; a slaver, a vessel used in the slave-trade; an East Indiaman, a West Indiaman, a vessel intended for trading with the East or West Indies. In all probability some such distinctive terms obtained from the infancy of navigation; and if so, as the trade of Tarshish, and its connection with Britain and other places in the Atlantic, must have required vessels of the largest size and strongest construction, is it not reasonable to suppose that these were distinguished from those used for the coasting trade of the Mediterranean, by being called "ships of Tarshish?" Let this be admitted, and it will be perceived that the navigation of the eastern ocean would require ships of this class; and we have therefore, in the Book of Kings, an account strictly correct,—“ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir.” And then, as the Books of Chronicles were written after the captivity, when this trade had ceased for centuries, it may be easily imagined that the sense of the phrase, “ships of Tarshish,” might have been misapprehended, and have led to the reading now found in the texts referred to. At all events, on a question of difference of statement in these two authorities, no Biblical scholar will hesitate to give the preference to the Book of Kings.

NOTE 63, page 216.—*The Situation of Ophir and its Trade.*

It is amusing to read the speculations of the learned as to the geography of the port to which this commercial fleet of Solomon sailed. The coasts of Asia, Africa, and even Europe, from Ceylon to the western part of Spain, have been searched for the purpose of finding it, and many places have been selected as the probable port. If the learned and laborious researches of Mr. Forster are received with the attention and confidence which generally they appear to merit, this perplexing question will be regarded as settled. We regret that our limits render an abridgment of this author necessary.

Mr. Forster observes, that “the contradictory opinions of the learned, who alternately transport the Ophir of the Old Testament to Africa or to India, to the coast of Sofala, or the Island of Ceylon, rest wholly on the plea in which they altogether originated, that the name and dwelling-place of Ophir are nowhere to be found among the settlements of his brethren in Arabia. Consequently, if we recover, in an appropriate part of the peninsula, not only the name and seat of this patriarch, but his name and seat in unquestionable connection with an old and famous mart of gold, specious learned theories must at once give way before conclusive historical facts.” Our author then proceeds to show that in Sale and D’Anville, as in modern maps, “Ofor,” or “Ofir,” appears as the name of a city and district in the mountains of Oman in Southern Arabia; that this district was, in the time of Pliny, occupied by descendants of Joktan, and was therefore presumptively the seat of the Joktanite Ophir; and, further, that this district was by Pliny celebrated for its traffic in gold; a fact confirmed by the researches of Niebuhr, who remarks that Oman is a district still containing metallic deposits.

From all this it is confidently inferred, 1. That the Ofor of the maps is the Ophir of the Old Testament. 2. That the gold coast mentioned by Pliny was the place to which the fleet of Solomon sailed. 3. That this Ophir was the seat of the patriarch of that name, the son of Joktan.

If these conclusions are correct, then we find the course of this commercial voyage without further difficulty. The vessels would sail down the Red Sea, and coast the Arabian peninsula to the mouth of the Persian Gulf: this would place them in contact with Ophir. Here might be a mart for oriental produce; or, while a part of the navy remained here to conduct commercial operations, another part might cross the bay, and coast the peninsula of India, as far as was necessary for their purpose, and in this way the produce of southern India, and even of Ceylon, might be obtained.

But it may be thought that this voyage could not occupy three years. Perhaps, in the strict sense of the words, it did not. Michaëlis has shown that the original may be rendered, "In the third year." It is well known that in the Arabian Sea the wind blows from the south-west from April to September, and from the north-east from October to March. The fleet would therefore have to leave Ezion-geber in sufficient time to arrive at Oman before the end of September, as, if they failed in this, the contrary monsoon would prevent their reaching it. But then their multifarious commercial operations could not be completed early enough to allow them to reach the mouth of the Red Sea, on their return, before the end of March, and, consequently, they would be obliged to wait for the next monsoon. Suppose, then, that this fleet sailed from Ezion-geber in April, and that they reached their destination in September, as they would not be able to return by the next monsoon, they would have to remain at Oman until the following October, when, returning, they would reach their starting-point in February or March. But then, as the Jewish civil year began at the autumnal equinox, this voyage would be said to have occupied three years, because it was begun in the seventh month of the first year, and completed in the sixth month of the third year. Something of this kind appears to have taken place; although, as we are not sufficiently informed of the rate at which Phenician vessels sailed, nor of the manner in which their commercial operations were carried on, no particular illustration of the Scripture narrative can be given; nor, for the same reason, can any objection be raised against it.

NOTE 64, page 216.—*The Geography of Sheba.*

MR. FORSTER has arranged the conclusions of Bochart on this subject, with illustrations and remarks of his own, in such a manner as to leave no doubt respecting the situation of the kingdom over which the queen of Sheba ruled.

1. It is shown that the products of her kingdom, as described in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, are identical with those of the kingdom of Sabea, of which Mariaba or Saba was the capital, as given by Strabo, the elder Pliny, and other classical authorities.

2. The corroborative circumstance that this queen is by our Lord called "the queen of the south," an expression equivalent to "queen of Yemen:" Yemen or Tamin, in Arabic, denoting at once the south generally, and peculiarly the territory of Arabia Felix, or the southern quarter of the peninsula. Mr. Forster remarks here, "In the Hebrew version of St. Matthew's Gospel, νότος is rendered by *Tamin*, as though our Lord's expression had been 'queen of Yemen.' Most probably it was so in the Aramean dialect in which he spoke: and that *Tamin* standing at once for 'Yemin' and for 'the south,' the evangelist has rendered it in its most comprehensive sense, to make it more generally intelligible."

3. The significant geographical indication supplied by our Lord's expression, "She came from the extremities of the earth;" a description which, taken in connection with that of "queen of the south," could, at Jerusalem, be used appropriately only to denote the southern extremity of Arabia, which terminates in the Indian Ocean.

4. The striking agreement with these internal marks, and the still more remarkable concurrence among themselves, of wholly independent traditions respecting the country of the queen of Sheba; ecclesiastical history uniting with rabbinical and Mahometan in accounts describing her as the queen of the Sabeian kingdom of Yemen, and Mariaba or Saba as the seat of her government.

Here, then, in the extreme south-east of the Arabian peninsula, the dominions of this queen are found; and here also, immediately adjoining her territory, is found Ophir, the seat and centre of Solomon's maritime trade: and thus we have a complete exposition of the most important points of this interesting part of sacred history. (See Forster's Historical Geography of Arabia.)

NOTE 65, page 218.—*The Effect of Solomon's commercial Policy upon the Conduct of Egypt toward Israel.*

At the beginning of his reign, we find Solomon holding the most friendly relations with Egypt, and marrying a princess of that country. But, although we hear of no rupture or war, circumstances appear in the history which show that this friendly feeling had passed away before the death of Solomon. It is worthy of remark, that Hadad, the young prince of Edom, who was taken to Egypt when a child, was, when he grew up, greatly loved and honored by Pharaoh; that even Jeroboam, who had attempted Solomon's life, found a safe asylum in that country; further, that, before the reign of Solomon closed, this Hadad left Egypt, and endeavored to recover his hereditary kingdom of Edom; but, failing there, and obtaining assistance from Rezin, he succeeded in wresting some part of Syria from the Hebrew government. It is scarcely possible to suppose that the king of Egypt could have protected these men, and have countenanced their designs, while he was on perfectly friendly terms with Solomon. But when it is known that the success of the Hebrew king in his commercial enterprises had crippled the trade of Egypt, and that the possession of Edom and Syria alone enabled him to do so, we can easily understand why Pharaoh might wish Hadad success.

NOTE 66, page 227.—*Reason why the spiritual Religion of the Patriarchs was not more fully recorded by Moses.*

No error has led to more serious mistakes respecting the religion of the early ages, than the notion that the Bible contains an historical record of religion from the beginning. Those who consider that we have in the Book of Genesis all that Moses wrote respecting the affairs of mankind, for the space of thirty-eight centuries, will see that it could not have been intended to give a history, much less an exposition, of the religion of this period. To presume, therefore, that what is not recorded did not exist, is to adopt a fallacy of the most mischievous character. It has been already shown that the divinely appointed mode of transmitting revealed truth under the patriarchal dispensation, was by tradition. When Moses was appointed to record a brief account of the creation, the deluge, the distribution of the human family over the face of the earth, in connection with the origin of the Hebrew family, and the enunciation of the Divine purpose respecting Israel, it did not come within his plan to record in detail the religious character even of the most prominent individuals. But are we, then, to infer that deep and profound patriarchal piety did not exist?

Our Lord has given us, in a single sentence, more information respecting the character and object of Abraham's faith, than all that Moses wrote. A few verses in the Epistle to the Hebrews afford a clearer view of the spiritual exercises and acquirements of Abel, Enoch, Noah, and the Hebrew fathers, than is found in the Book of Genesis. Spiritual piety of a high order, mighty faith affording a clear view of the promised Redeemer, and producing an internal testimony of Divine acceptance, did exist anterior to Moses. This religion was unquestionably the experience of Jacob, and its existence fully recognized by his family, and perpetuated among their children. Moses himself was a partaker of its saving influence and power: there was no necessity for his describing what was universally admitted. This spiritual religion, then, was inwrought into the Mosaic system, not as an adjunct circumstance, or mere element of the economy, but as its spirit and life. And the religion of the Hebrews, when they entered Canaan, and throughout their future career, can never be clearly understood where this is not recognized. The pertinacity with which many writers on sacred history either conceal or deny the existence of this spiritual religion, renders the frequent iteration of sound views on the subject imperative.

NOTE 67, page 229.—*Peculiar Attestation to the Truth of the Hebrew Faith.*

THE two great pillars of revealed truth are miracle and prophecy. By these means it has pleased the all-wise Jehovah to manifest the verity of his communications to mankind. While the suitability of these displays of Infinite Wisdom and power to this purpose is obvious, it is equally so, that they are wisely adapted to bear their testimony to the truth under different circumstances. A miracle wrought in attestation of a divine mission or doctrine affords to those who witness it "absolute demonstration;" although it must be plain that the measure of evidence which this miracle may afford to succeeding ages will depend upon other circumstances, such as the fidelity, perspicuity, and credibility of the narrative, and the extent to which it may be made known. On the other hand, a prophetic enunciation of future events, however grand the object may be, and although very many contingencies are involved in its accomplishment, will afford no evidence whatever of the divine vocation of the prophet, or of the truth of his doctrine, to those who are the immediate recipients of the communication; because any one might predict, but upon the delivery of the prediction it cannot be certainly known whether it will be fulfilled. When, however, the prophecy is verified by the foretold events coming to pass, then this evidence is both clear and powerful.

On a few special and important occasions, when the great purposes of God concerning mankind have been announced or put into operation, both these kinds of evidence have been brought simultaneously to unite in authenticating divine truth. It was so on this occasion. We have here, first, a glorious fulfillment of prophecy. The denunciation against Canaan, the repeated predictions given to Abraham, the entailment of these to Isaac, the election of Jacob, and the predictive promises to him, with the prophecies vouchsafed by Moses,—all unite here, and are all fulfilled. Observe, these prophecies were given on different occasions, to different persons; the first delivered fifteen hundred years before the period of their accomplishment, the others spread over five centuries before that event. Again; these predictions were not scattered and unconnected declarations, thrown out to persons who neglected and forgot them; on the contrary, for four hundred years they had been treasured up as the great trust and inheritance of this family and race; through hope in them every other prospect had been abandoned, every opposing means of wealth and aggrandizement renounced; and here, in the occupation of Canaan, these predictions are gloriously fulfilled. What a brilliant proof of the divinity of the faith and

calling of the Hebrews! Yet, as if this was not sufficient, the accomplishment of these predictions was effected by means of the most stupendous miracles, thus affording the Israelites the greatest possible demonstration of the presence and power of Jehovah, and, consequently, of the verity and obligation of their religion.

NOTE 68, page 230.—*Israel taught and trained by God.*

THE special divine interposition which constantly watched over the Israelites in the wilderness, and which, by unceasing influence, was directed to imbue the individual mind of the whole community with a clear perception of the immediate government of God, and a strong faith in his truth and power, which was indeed the spirit of their religious system, has not been sufficiently recognized.

Many portions of Scripture which clearly exhibit this interposition might be quoted; it will be sufficient to refer to one, which, while bearing decisive evidence on the subject under consideration, is a very remarkable specimen of pure revelation embodied in the most exquisite poetry. In that inimitable ode which Moses composed shortly before his death, speaking of the watchful care of Jehovah over his people during their wandering in the wilderness, and the incessant operation of his grace to guide them into all his will, he says,—

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest,
Fluttereth over her young,
Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them,
Beareth them upon her wings:
So the Lord alone did lead him,
And there was no strange god with him.” (Deut. xxxii, 11, 12.)

All the exquisite beauty and incomparable tenderness of this description bear immediately upon the great purpose of God in his dealings with his people in the desert,—to bring them to imitate him, that, influenced by his truth, they might act upon its teaching, and thus fully enter into the Divine will. This process of teaching and training is here described with exquisite pathos. But the imagery, in point of order, is not arranged, according to the habits of the bird, by the circumstances of the Israelites. Hence we first read, “As an eagle stirreth up her nest.” By these words the inspired prophet describes the eagle, when her young are of an age to be taught to fly, as agitating, disturbing, and even tearing her nest, to induce them to acquire the practice of locomotion. Thus in the wilderness did Jehovah lead his people about from one place to another, making the place of their residence and the manner of their life disagreeable, that they might be induced to seek rest and happiness in a conformity to his will, and in the word of his promise. But the Hebrews were carnal and corrupt in their hearts; and therefore as an eagle “fluttereth over her young,” so did Jehovah shed his influence upon them. This clause deserves very particular attention. The word which our translators have here rendered “fluttereth,” is רָחַף, *rāh'-ghaph*, which occurs only three times in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is not easy, therefore, to define its sense. Jeremiah appears to have used the term to signify the tremulous motion occasioned in the human body by extreme fear. Chap. xxxiii, 9. In the text it seems to denote the brooding of the parent eagle over her young, for the purpose of imbuing them with the warmth of her own body. Moses employed the word to express the primitive action of the Spirit of God upon the chaotic mass in the work of creation. Gen. i, 2. From the supposed reference of this term to the action of a bird in hatching her young, Parkhurst supposes the Heathen nations to have acquired their notion that this world was formed from an egg. (Parkhurst, *sub voce*. See also Grotius, *De Verit. Rel. Christ.*,

lib. i, cap. 16, note 1.) Here, then, Jehovah represents himself as teaching and training his people, as the parent eagle does her young. Their residence is frequently changed, and made very inconvenient, that they may be led to expect and hope to realize the promised rest. The Spirit of God overshadows his redeemed; and as the parent imparts her own living heat to her young, so God sheds the vitality of his own spiritual life upon the souls of his people; as the eagle, teaching her feeble offspring, would spread abroad her pinions, and even bear them on her own shoulders, if their strength failed, so did Jehovah come down to their weakness, that he might raise them to his holiness. We have here, therefore, an incomparable picture, but one as replete with truth as beauty, in which are represented to our minds the love, care, constant influence, and devoted energy which God himself employed on behalf of Israel.

NOTE 69, page 231.—*The Computation of Sabbatical Years.*

MUCH difference of opinion has obtained as to the time when the first Sabbatical year was held. It is not necessary to notice the wild opinion of Bedford, or the strange fancies which other writers have put forth on this subject. It will be sufficient to assert that this strange law was actually brought into operation, and that the first year of the Hebrew location in Palestine was the era whence this septennial computation began. The objection commonly made to this opinion is, that the Sabbath was to be a year after six years of agricultural operations, and that the land could not have been tilled until it had been subdued. But as the manna ceased when the Israelites arrived at Gilgal, they, of course, began to cultivate the ground in that neighborhood, and the other parts of the country as they were occupied. (Usher, *Annales*, A. M., 2554; Jennings's "Jewish Antiquities," p. 528.)

NOTE 70, page 235.—*The Ephod of Gideon.*

THE intention of Gideon in these arrangements is manifest from the terms in which the sacred writer records its results. The "thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house." Judges viii, 27. If this judge had intended to establish idolatrous worship when he prepared this costly ephod and its adjuncts, whatever the effect might have been upon others, it could not have been called a *snare* to himself and his family. By this sinful purpose and sinful action, he would at once have forfeited his covenant condition, and become politically a traitor, and religiously a profane sinner. But the Scripture, instead of describing this sudden and intentional sin, speaks of his having been taken in a snare; clearly teaching that the effect of these arrangements had not been foreseen, that their pernicious consequences came unawares upon Jerubbaal and his family. The only consistent solution of Gideon's conduct, therefore, appears to be that which we have given. He prepared this ephod, and other sacerdotal and ecclesiastical articles, for the purpose of establishing divine worship in his own city. But this, being a departure from the written law, which required all the people to assemble at the sanctuary, was a serious error, although Jehovah was the intended object of this worship. But the evil did not terminate here. The people attended this place in an improper manner, and associated its worship with idolatrous objects, until at length they departed from Jehovah, and even Gideon and his family were ensnared by these unhallowed practices.

NOTE 71, page 235.—*Teraphim.*

IT has been already shown that, in patriarchal times, teraphim were known, and at least regarded with sacred respect. That these still continued in use, is certain; and, as a brief exposition of what is known respecting them may cast some light

on this part of the subject, we will endeavor to give it. We have seen that the term was employed in respect to something used by Micah and the Danites in worship, which, there is every reason to believe, had Jehovah for its object. We also find the word in the Book of Hosea, as referring to some essential element in Jewish worship. In describing the religious desolation of Israel, the prophet says, "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." Hosea iii, 4. That the sacred writer, in the latter part of this verse, is describing the great requisites for Jewish worship, is evident, and especially when it is considered that the word מַצֵּבָה , *matzebah*, here rendered "image," may be more properly taken to mean an "altar:" this interpretation agrees very well with the word "sacrifice" going before it. Although this sense may be allowed, it is more probable that מַצֵּבָה , *matzebah*, is here copied by mistake for מִזְבֵּחַ , *mizbeach*, "an altar," the letters of these words being very similar, and easily mistaken for each other. But instead of either, one, if not two, of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. has מִנְחָה , *minchah*, "an oblation," which also agrees with the scope of the passage. (See Patrick's and Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentaries, *in loco*.)

Another text in which the word "teraphim" occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, is 1 Sam. xix, 13, in which, speaking of the stratagem which David's wife employed to deceive her father Saul, it is said, "And Michal took an *image*, and laid it in the bed," &c. The word which is here rendered "image," is in the original *teraphim*. On this point a learned author has observed, "We have most remarkable proofs that the worship of teraphim coexisted with the worship of Jehovah, even in pious families; and we have more than one instance of the wives of worshipers of Jehovah not finding full contentment and satisfaction in the stern moral truth of spiritual worship, and therefore carrying on some private symbolism of fondling the teraphim."—*Kitto's Cyclopædia*, vol. ii, p. 845. But however comparatively innocent this might have appeared at first, (and it certainly was not denounced with the same rigor as gross idolatry,) yet it is clear that, even under the government of the judges, it had become very injurious in its tendency, and very offensive to God. A passage in the address of Samuel to Saul casts important light upon this point. The prophet, reproving the king for his conduct in the case of Amalek, says, "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as *iniquity* and idolatry." 1 Samuel xv, 23. The last clause, given literally, would read, "Stubbornness is as *teraphim* and idolatry." Here we have not only a condemnation of the use of teraphim, but a plain intimation of its insidious character, as preparing the way to idol-worship. In later times this influence had been so effectual, that teraphim and idolatry seem to have been identified. Hence Zechariah says, "For the idols" (in the Hebrew, *teraphim*) "have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain." Zech. x, 2. And of the king of Babylon, when described by Ezekiel as ascertaining the course of his army by divination, it is said, "He made his arrows bright, he consulted with images," (Hebrew, *teraphim*,) "he looked in the liver." Ezek. xxi, 21.

From what has been said, it is probable that those who have read over the many speculations of the learned on this obscure subject, will be inclined to concur in the opinion, that at first the teraphim were made as visible symbols of some important element of patriarchal faith, probably of the Edenic cherubim, or of the original promise of redemption; that afterward, among the early Israelites, they were occasionally adapted to the sacred furniture of the Mosaic sanctuary, and among the Gentiles to commemorate deceased ancestors, but that ultimately they everywhere led to idolatry. Hence we find heathens prostituting them to the vilest forms and purposes, and the Jews regarding them with devotional, and therefore sinful, reverence.

NOTE 72, page 240.—*Jephthah's Daughter.*

SCARCELY any Biblical subject which has led to extensive investigation, of which conflicting views have been taken, presents such an array of great names on each side of the question as this. We have considerable doubts whether this point has been always argued on the ground of pure criticism, and without influence from external bias. In the first place, some writers seem to think the honor of the elect people of God involved in this transaction; and they therefore struggle to avoid the admission, that a judge of Israel immolated his own daughter. Again: it has been a point of no small consequence with a certain class of writers to have it believed, that in the early ages of Jewish history a number of females, devoted to God, and bound by vows of chastity, were in attendance on the sacred tabernacle.

With respect to the first of these, it may be safely said, that the election or appointment of a person to be judge did not, by any means, vouch for his religious character: if so, what shall we say of the obliquities of Samson's career? And as to the second, however strongly those who wish to have ancient countenance for the celibacy of the Church of Rome may desire it, it never has been, and never can be, proved that women, under vows of virginity, were ever in attendance on the tabernacle. That women were employed to embroider curtains, and wash the linen of the sanctuary, may be readily admitted; but that they were under any religious obligation to abstain from marriage, there is not a tittle of evidence.

The case of the daughter of Jephthah must therefore stand on its own merits, or the grammatical construction of the words, in connection with the circumstances of the parties concerned. Dr. Hales, the most talented of the modern writers who have supported the opinion that this young woman was not immolated, but devoted to perpetual virginity, argues that the words should be rendered, "Shall *either* be the Lord's, *or* I will offer it up for a burnt-offering." Judges xi, 31. It is freely admitted that the copulative conjunctions, one of which, the *vau*, occurs twice in this clause, should be rendered "according to the signification of the passages in which they are found."—*Lee's Grammar*, p. 380. But when the learned writer contends that it should be here read disjunctively, "because the vow consisted of two parts: 1. That what person soever met him should be the Lord's, or be dedicated to his service; and, 2. That what beast soever met him (if clean) should be offered up for a burnt-offering unto the Lord;" (*Sacred Chronology*, vol. ii, p. 289;)—we are bound to take two exceptions to his argument. What was the language of Jephthah?—"Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house." Does not this necessarily refer to a human being? What else could be expected to come forth from the doors of his *house*? As Dr. Kitto forcibly observes, "His house was surely not a place for flocks and herds, nor could any animal be expected to come forth to meet him; that is, with the purpose of meeting him on his return." And this seems to be implied by the language. It appears then highly probable that Jephthah's original purpose referred to some human being. From the scope of the subject, therefore, the division of the vow into two such clauses as are given by Dr. Hales is unwarrantable. Then, with respect to the grammatical rendering of the passage, Russel urges "that there does not appear to be such decided opposition or contrast between the two clauses of the sentence as to require the use of the disjunctive *vau*. As there is no direct opposition between *being the Lord's* and *being offered up in sacrifice to the Lord*, I cannot see the force of the argument which is founded upon the verbal criticism now mentioned. Nay, as the former member of the alternative proposition in this case evidently includes the latter, the second can only be regarded as an explanation of the first: and hence Jephthah must be understood as declaring that he

would devote to the Lord whatsoever first presented itself to him on his return, and give it up in the particular form of a burnt-offering."—*Connection*, vol. i, p. 481.

NOTE 73, page 242.—*The Sons of the Prophets.*

FROM the time of Moses to that of Samuel, only a few isolated cases of prophecy are recorded: yet, during the government of the latter, we find prophets associated in companies, in several places, and favored with a very special, and in some cases overwhelming, Divine influence. The first mention of anything of this kind is 1 Sam. x, 5, when Samuel foretold to Saul that he should "meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place." It is very uncertain where this was. The text calls it "the hill of God;" and the connection shows that while Saul visited Samuel at Ramah, he had to travel from thence, beyond Bethel and the plain of Tabor, to reach this place. But, whatever the precise locality of this spot, here was a school or college of prophets. There was another such establishment at Naioth at Ramah, near to Samuel's residence. We know not how many more of these institutions existed in the time of Samuel; but afterwards there were similar establishments at Bethel and Jericho. 2 Kings ii, 3, 5.

No light has been cast on the means of admission to these schools, or on the character which the pupils were expected to manifest and sustain. Information on these latter points would help us to form an opinion whether, as some have supposed, these schools were entirely in the hands of the Levites, and chiefly confined to the teaching of the ceremonial law; or whether, as seems more likely, they were designed to inculcate the spirituality and holiness which God required of his people. "It seems somewhat strange," as Bishop Stillingfleet observes, "that God should take so great care about the shell and outside of his worship, and none at all for the moral and spiritual part of it."—*Origines*, b. ii, ch. iv, sect. 2. This, indeed, seems to be strongly supported by several considerations:—1. The intention of the institution of the prophets in the time of Moses seems to have been to disseminate a moral and spiritual influence, as auxiliary to the external law. 2. The vocation of the prophets was precisely of this kind; and it would be strange indeed if the course of education and training bore no relation to the great object for which it was appointed. 3. The same may be inferred from the rich amount of spiritual influence with which they were favored.

If these considerations are sufficient to establish the fact that one great object of these institutions was to give a clear knowledge of the spiritual requirements of the law, and to enforce in the life practical holiness, then it is easy to perceive that they must have exercised a most salutary influence upon the national morals and religion.

But in other respects their utility must have been very great. The existence of permanent institutions in different parts of the land, where God was pleased frequently to display an overwhelming influence of his Spirit, must have done much to uphold the supreme authority of Jehovah, and to check the propensity to idolatry which this people so often evinced. The power of these spiritual visitations is seen more than once in the case of Saul.

Nor is it easy to conceive how these schools could have answered the intended end, but by the promotion of spiritual religion. As all prophecy under this dispensation was based upon the Mosaic law, it was obviously proper that persons sustaining this office should be fully instructed in its nature and requirements. It was also necessary that they should be generally well informed and educated; and there can be no doubt that both these objects were kept in view in these schools. But we can see no necessary connection between these attainments and the gift of prophecy in the ordinary sense. We are aware that the same remark may also apply, to some

extent, with respect to personal religion. But then, if individual holiness could not confer this gift, it certainly made a man more fit for its reception, and more faithful in its exercise. Can we form any idea of an Isaiah, an Ezekiel, a Jeremiah, without personal piety?

We have referred to the students in these schools as the persons who were afterward called by Jehovah to act as his prophets. This was generally the case. There is one exception; but that exception seems to prove the rule. Amos said, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos vii, 14, 15. In this case the declaration which the prophet makes of his singular election to this office clearly shows that, in the ordinary course, prophets were trained to their profession, and previously known during the period of their tutelage as "sons of the prophets."

NOTE 74, page 246.—*Typical Importance of David's Tabernacle.*

If the tabernacle of Moses remained at Gibeon, forsaken of the ark and the Divine Presence, but retaining the brazen altar, and still the scene of the Levitical worship, while the ark of the covenant rested in the tabernacle of David at Zion, where a service of prayer and thanksgiving was continually offered; and if this arrangement, as it would appear, was made by the warrant and under the authority of inspiration; then it becomes us very carefully to inquire whether the erection of this tabernacle, and its appointed worship, were likely to have any effect on the religious knowledge and character of Israel during this period. (See Patriarchal Age, p. 27.)

In reference to the first question, it must be observed that the tabernacle of David has been made the basis of prophetic declaration. Amos has this remarkable passage: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this." Amos ix, 11, 12. We remind the reader of the first volume of *Sacred Annals*, that this text was cited as one of those which bear indisputable evidence of Masoretic corruption. We there showed that the Septuagint reading of this passage, sanctioned as it is by the inspired authority of the New Testament, must be received as genuine. This would justify us in rendering the latter part of the passage, and the words which involve the point and purpose of the prediction, thus: "That the remnant of men, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, may earnestly seek me, says the Lord who does all these things." (Sir L. C. L. Brenton's translation.) It will be seen immediately that this new rendering completely alters the sense of the text. The present Hebrew and the authorized version make the object of the prophecy to be the dominion of Israel over all the Heathen. The Septuagint reading exhibits this object as the gathering in of the Gentiles to a participation in the high privileges of the people of God. For the purpose of deciding a very important argument, this text was quoted in the latter sense by James in the Council of Jerusalem; (Acts xv, 16, 17;) and the facts of his inspiration, and that his whole audience, many of whom were greatly opposed to the consequence drawn from it, were, notwithstanding, without exception, compelled silently to admit its force, abundantly prove that this is the intent of the text. This being clear, we may pause to inquire into the design of the prophecy, and thence to deduce the object of the Holy Spirit in the apparently anomalous circumstances which have excited our surprise. The quotation of the prophecy by James fixes its reference to the triumphs of the gospel, and especially to the ingathering of the Gentiles to the privileges of the Church of God.

This was the point of his judgment. "Simeon," saith he, "hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written;" and then he quotes the text, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down," &c. Acts xv, 14-17.

If, then, we are to be guided by this obvious application of the prophecy, it will appear that, while the Mosaic tabernacle and its ceremonial rites were typical of the great sacrifice of Christ, and of the blessed results of his atonement and intercession, the tabernacle of David was calculated to prefigure, with equal clearness, the common character of gospel privilege, the pure and simple nature of its worship, and the fullness and freeness of the access unto God which it was to provide.

To show this more clearly, it will only be necessary to observe that the disputable question in the Jerusalem Council was not, whether Gentiles were admissible to the Christian Church; this was admitted on all hands. The question was, whether Gentile Christians were required to keep the ceremonial law. "Peter affirmed of those Gentiles who had been admitted to the Church by his ministry that God had put no difference between them and the Jews, admitting both by faith, not imposing the yoke of the law upon either. And to this, says St. James, to this declaration of how (*καθως*) God admitted them, not putting the yoke on them,—to this, the words of the prophets do agree; and of this he gives, as an instance, Amos's prophecy of the rebuilding of David's tabernacle. Did the prophecy really agree to that assertion? Did it apply to that *question* so as to silence further controversy about it?

"It certainly seems to have had this effect. It seems to have put to silence the Judaizers. No Pharisee could venture, in the face of this argument, to affirm that it was needful for Gentile Christians to keep the law." (Archdeacon Spofford's "Letter to the Irish Ecclesiastical Journal," Sept. 1847; to which able communication we have been much indebted in this particular part of the subject.)

If this was the case, it could only have arisen from this fact being universally recognized by the primitive Christian Church, and sanctioned by apostolic inspiration; namely, that an acceptable spiritual worship was offered unto God in the tabernacle of David; a worship free from the cumbrous ceremonial of the Mosaic law. And therefore, as the prophets of Jehovah had predicted that the kingdom of the Messiah should be, not a revival of the Mosaic sanctuary, but of the tabernacle of David, so the yoke of the law could not be consistently laid on those who might be made partakers of the faith of Christ.

If we have been thus far successful in eliciting the truth in this interesting case, it appears to cast important light on the great scheme of redemption. It shows that in the best days of Judaism, in the very heart of the Mosaic Church, the place of the Divine Presence, the propitiatory itself, was made accessible to spiritual worshipers without the intervention of sacrificial rites or Levitical ceremonies. This important fact not only exists as a proof of the Divine purpose to give fallen man, as far as possible, access unto God; it is made the basis of repeated predictive allusion. Speaking of Hezekiah's government, with an ultimate reference to the kingdom of Messiah, Isaiah says, "And in mercy shall the throne be established; and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness." Isaiah xvi, 5. And again in Amos ix, 11, 12. Thus far does this singular case unveil the Divine purpose; and we see, at the only period in Jewish history when there was no danger of a lapse into idolatry, and when God's ancient people had considerable spiritual-mindedness and devotional feeling, the bonds of the economy relaxed, and spiritual privileges imparted, which made the exception a striking type of the glories of Messiah's kingdom.

NOTE 75, page 251.—*Origin of Synagogues.*

THE religious services of the synagogues, as far as the different circumstances of the people would allow, appear to have been very similar to those of David's tabernacle. Singing, prayer, reading the Scriptures, and expounding them, formed the service of the synagogue in the time of Christ. In the days of David, singing and prayer were stated exercises in the tabernacle. But it has been alleged that, as in later times there could be no synagogue without a copy of the law, so, before copies of the law were multiplied, there could be no synagogue. This consequence does not appear to be satisfactory. For, first, "till the time of the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes, no part of the Scriptures but the Pentateuch was read in the synagogues;" (Lewis's "Hebrew Republic," vol. i, p. 503;) although no one doubts the previous existence of these places of worship. If, then, from the time of Ezra to that of Antiochus, the synagogue worship was conducted without the reading of the prophets and the Hagiographa, why might it not have been maintained, before that time, without the reading of any Scripture? The fact proves that this service was altered and accommodated to circumstances. And as, in David's time, an exposition of God's gracious dealings with Israel, his promises of mercy and goodness towards them, and exhortations grounded on these covenant blessings, formed a part of their religious exercises; in later times, when copies of the law were multiplied, these would naturally lead to a reading and exposition of revealed truth.

But it has been contended, that no synagogues existed until after the restoration from the Babylonish captivity. (Lewis's Hebrew Republic, vol. i, p. 482.) So it has been urged that they arose during the captivity; (Jahn's *Archæologia*, art. 343;) while, on the other hand, it has been maintained, that they existed in patriarchal times. We must, therefore, be guided by the probabilities of the case. The main argument against the existence of synagogues before the captivity, is based on the alleged silence of Holy Scripture respecting them. Yet on this same ground, the learned Godwin contends, that there were many as early as the time of David. (Moses and Aaron, lib. ii, chap. 2.) This view, if not fully sustained as to date by the learned expositor of Godwin, is abundantly borne out as it respects the existence of synagogues before the exile. He regards Psalm lxxiv as written "on occasion of the Babylonish captivity," and considers the eighth verse, "They have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land," as correctly translated, and as proving the case: adding, "The word מִקְרָא *mikra*, which we render 'a convocation,' seems more naturally to import a place of public worship in which the people assembled, than the assembly itself; as in the following passage of Isaiah: 'And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, מִקְרָאֵיהָ *mikrajeha*, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night;' (chap. iv, 5;) in which there is a manifest allusion to the tabernacle, whereon the cloud and pillar of fire rested in the wilderness. Exodus xl, 38. And what, then, could these מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ *mikrè kodhesh* be, but synagogues, or edifices for public worship?"—*Jenning's Jewish Antiquities*, p. 365.

There is one feature common to all synagogues, which, although it appears to have been generally overlooked, or regarded as unimportant, in our judgment does much to connect the origin of these places with the tabernacle of David. In every synagogue there was a chest, in imitation of the ark, in which the book of the law was kept. Now, the service of the synagogue bore no similarity to that of the temple. No other part of the furniture of the one had any resemblance or imitation of the sacred things of the other. Why, then, this exception? Why a copy of the ark? And why was this universal? When the ark was taken to the temple, its

place might have been supplied by an imitation; and, if this was the origin of synagogues, all the difficulty is solved.

NOTE 76, page 256.—*Hyssop*.

COMMENTATORS generally suppose the Psalmist here to refer to the purification of lepers, as described in the law. Lev. xiv, 6; Num. xix, 6. It is, however, more probable that he alludes to the necessity of atonement. The word rendered "purge me" (חַחֲטָאִי) properly means, "expiate my sin." We have, in the statement of the apostle, the application to which the royal penitent seems to have turned his mind: "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and HYSSOP, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people." It was this application of sacrificial atonement of which David speaks; he, like St. Paul, having elicited the great principle, that "without shedding of blood is no remission." Hebrews ix, 19-22. Speaking, therefore, of the instrument by which the blood was applied, while intending the blood itself, David admits the impossibility of escape from the consequences of his sin, but through vicarious sacrifice; and thus prays that the blood of atonement might be applied, first to atone, and then water, that he might be cleansed; pardon through expiating blood, and purity through the Holy Spirit, being the burden of his prayer.

NOTE 77, page 270.—*The Conduct of Rehoboam*.

THE behavior of this young king to the representatives of his people has been universally condemned, perhaps, in some instances, without being understood. It has not always been taken into the account, that this deputation was headed by Jeroboam, a young man who had attempted to kill Solomon, and had consequently been obliged to flee into Egypt. Rehoboam also knew that he had been supported and protected by the king of that country, from whence Hadad, who had also been a refugee, had come and excited troubles in Edom, and established himself in a part of Syria. When, therefore, the new sovereign saw that the elders of Israel had sent to Egypt, and called from thence the man who had attempted the murder of the late king, and placed him at their head, when they came to demand the introduction of a more lenient policy,—even supposing that Rehoboam knew nothing of the prophecy of Ahijah,—he could not be expected to look with much favor on the application.

The truth appears to be, that this was not a casual application, answered in a pettish manner by a wayward youth, as is sometimes supposed. It was a demand made by the bulk of the people for an alleviation of their public burdens, which demand was presented in a manner the most imposing, and which probably was intended to intimidate the king. The case was one of the greatest national importance, and probably was regarded as such by the royal council. The question was simply whether conciliation or coercion should be the policy of the new reign. The old ministers counseled the former, the young men the latter. The king was guided by the opinion of his companions, and the dismemberment of the kingdom was the consequence.

NOTE 78, page 271.—*The Divine Purpose in the Division of the Kingdom*.

It is scarcely possible to study this history without desiring to know by what providential arrangements or spiritual interposition the religious fidelity and unity of the Hebrew Church could have been maintained, while the people existed as two sepa-

rate nations. The sin of Jeroboam could not have been a necessary consequence of the division of the kingdom, or of his elevation to the throne. All doubt respecting this is removed by the general tenor of the history, and especially by the inspired communication of Abijah, 1 Kings xi, 38; yet it is not easy to conceive how, in those circumstances, religious defection could have been averted.

We wish to know the Divine purpose in its details, the Divine plan in actual operation; but this is not seen in the narrative. The Scriptural history of the Hebrews after the exodus is a record of God's purposes frustrated by man's unbelief, of Divine plans marred and disfigured by human disobedience. The theocracy in its purity and strength, the monarchy in godly maturity, the divided Hebrews as one Church; these, and many more elements of Hebrew progress, existed in Divine intention, but have never been developed on earth, and can only be fully understood in heaven.

NOTE 79, page 272.—*Peculiar religious Character of this History.*

IN the preceding part of this work, the history and religion of the several periods have been discussed in alternate chapters; and we shall have again to return to that plan, as generally best adapted to our purpose. Here, however, and in the history of Judah, from the accession of Rehoboam to the ruin of that kingdom, the religion and history are so inseparably connected, alternately presented to the view as cause and effect, that any separate discussion of these topics is extremely difficult, if not impracticable; and would confuse and embarrass, rather than elucidate, the subject. Throughout the existence of these kingdoms, therefore, their history and religion will be considered in connection.

NOTE 80, page 274.—*The Sin of Jeroboam.*

It is important to obtain a clear view of the religious character of this proceeding. We may acquire the most satisfactory information by proceeding inductively, beginning with those points which seem to be certain, and thence proceeding to those which may be generally regarded as doubtful. 1. The conduct of Jeroboam appears to be parallel to that of Aaron and the Israelites, when they made a golden calf at Sinai: it was not, therefore, a novel attempt. 2. It does not appear that, in either of these cases, there was a direct introduction of any heathen deity. All who will study the whole case, in subordination to Scriptural teaching, will appreciate the learning and judgment evinced by Mr. Faber in the investigation of this subject, and agree with him in saying, "When the matter is considered in all its bearings, we must, I think, almost inevitably conclude, that the two golden calves were copies of the two cherubim." 3. It seems plain that the worship instituted before these calves, was intended to be regarded as offered unto Jehovah. This was certainly the case with Aaron: he made proclamation for a feast unto JEHOVAH at the inauguration of the golden calf. Exod. xxxii, 5. And, as it was the object of Jeroboam to supersede the attractions of the temple at Jerusalem, it can scarcely be supposed that he would introduce a foreign idolatry. On the contrary, when it is considered that he made the Mosaic ritual his model, in respect of feasts and worship, (1 Kings xii, 32,) it follows, that the object of worship was intended to be the same.

What, then, was the true character of his sin? It was, first, a sinful schism. It broke the unity of the people of God, and it contravened his law. Jehovah had not only demanded the religious adoration of the people, and commanded them to worship him; he had, with equal explicitness, declared that he would be worshiped in

an appointed place, by men whom he had chosen, and in a prescribed manner. All these laws Jeroboam violated: he departed, of set purpose, from the place which God had chosen, appointed priests after his own will, and took upon himself to alter the times and manner of worship. And even this, in itself and in its consequences, would have been no small sin. But the iniquity of Jeroboam went beyond this. He erected an altar, copied the cherubim, and conformed the manner of his worship generally to the Mosaic ritual. If he had regarded all these as accessories to the worship, as, indeed, the originals were in the temple, the sin would then be of the grave kind already described: but Jeroboam had no present shekinah irradiating his figures. His great sin, therefore, as was the case with Aaron, consisted in a direct violation of the second commandment, by making this cherubic figure a personification of Deity, and by sacrificing to it as a god. (See Exod. xxxii, 4, 5, 31; 1 Kings xii, 28, 32.) This was idolatry. And this was an essential element in the institution: Jeroboam began, and continued, "sacrificing unto the calves that he had made." 1 Kings xii, 32. But it is alleged that this idolatry of Jeroboam bore evident resemblance to the Egyptian apis-worship. This may be accounted for in two ways:—first, there can be little doubt that this part of Egyptian mythology was a perversion of patriarchal rites, in which cherubic representations occurred. There might, therefore, be some resemblance between the calves of Jeroboam and Egyptian figures, on the ground that both were corruptions of the same sacred emblems. Again: it must be remembered, that Jeroboam had lived a long time in Egypt, and must have been familiar with the heathen worship of that country. And if, after the establishment of his idolatry, he found himself forsaken by the Levites, and that all his efforts had not conciliated the true worshipers of Jehovah, it would not seem strange for him to use Egyptian names or allusions in this worship. It is probable he did so; for Hosea terms these idols "the calves of Beth-Aven." *Aven* is the same as *Aun* or *On*, the idol to whom Potipherah, the father-in-law of Joseph, was priest. (See Faber's *Pagan Idolatry*, vol. i, p. 436.)

NOTE 81, page 278.—*The Statutes of Omri.*

THE measures adopted by Omri for the purpose of fully isolating the people of Israel from the services of the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, and of perpetuating, perhaps of increasing, their idolatrous practices, attached infamy to his name through successive generations. When the prophet Micah, many years afterward, was pointing out the iniquity of the people of Judah, he referred to this prince and his pernicious laws: "For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab." Micah vi, 16. These statutes were probably some severe laws against attending the worship of God at Jerusalem, or some successful enticements to idolatry, which were afterwards imitated by the apostate rulers of Judah.

NOTE 82, page 279.—*The Malediction of Joshua, and its Accomplishment on Hiel.*

WHEN Jericho was miraculously destroyed, the Hebrew chief pronounced a fearful prediction against the man who should dare to restore a place doomed to perpetual ruin, as a monument of the exercise of God's almighty power on behalf of his people. This denunciation was given thus: "Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." Joshua vi, 26. Hiel undertook this task, and, as the narrative informs us, suffered the threatened infliction. But what was this infliction? This question commentators do not agree to answer. It has been generally supposed that the words of Joshua doomed to

death all the posterity of the rash individual who had the temerity to engage in this prohibited undertaking; the first-born dying when the foundation was laid, the others in succession during the progress of the work, and the youngest when the gates were set up: so that that man who had made such efforts to provide for his family, and who hoped to have perpetuated their name and power by this erection, saw the utter ruin of his hopes in the very act.

Others, however, think the cause only referred to the great delay which should obstruct the building; that, if the foundation was laid when the eldest son of the builder was born, the youngest should come into the world before it was finished.

A third opinion is, that the person building the town sacrificed his two sons, the eldest on beginning to build, the youngest at the completion of the work.

The first of these expositions we regard as correct: the others are, in fact, only worthy of notice as specimens of the ingenuity which learned men employ to exclude the miraculous agency of God from the government of his people. The case, regarded in this aspect, would afford to the Israelites of that apostate age overwhelming proof of the certain existence, truth, and actual government of Jehovah over Israel. It is indeed manifest that the prophecy was fully understood at the time, and known to be perfectly fulfilled; thus establishing the verity of a Divine threatening delivered more than four hundred years before. In this sense it was always spoken of by ancient Jewish writers.

NOTE 83, page 290.—*The Case of Hazael.*

THE reply of Elisha to Hazael has occasioned much learned inquiry. Supposing the authorized version to involve a contradiction, Bishop Horsley, Kennicott, and others, render the language of the prophet thus: "Go say, Certainly thou shalt not recover." But the text, as Bishop Hall has well observed, is not contradictory. "It is more than a single answer that the prophet returns to this message. One answer he gives to Benhadad, who sent the message; another he gives to Hazael, who brings it. That to Benhadad is, 'Thou mayest surely recover;' that to Hazael, 'The Lord hath showed me that he shall surely die.' The first clause states that the disease is not mortal, that it will not cause the death of the king; the second that, notwithstanding, he will die from another cause." If the question be carefully considered, it will be seen that such an answer as this was required. Hazael was taught by the king to ask, "Shall I recover of this disease?" The answer is, that he might recover, the disease not being mortal, but that he would not, as, while under its influence, he would die from other causes. The drift of the narrative, therefore, makes the authorized version here the most satisfactory.

But in the subsequent part of the account it may admit of explanation: "It is generally understood that Hazael was struck with horror at the prediction; that these cruelties were most alien from his mind; that he then felt distressed and offended at the imputation of such evils to him; and yet, so little did he know his own heart, that when he got power, and had opportunity, he did the whole with a willing heart and a ready hand. On the contrary, I think he was *delighted* at the prospect; and his question rather implies a doubt whether a person so inconsiderable as he is shall ever have it in his power to do such great, not such *evil*, things; for, in his sight, they had no turpitude. The Hebrew text stands thus: 'But what! thy servant, this dog! that *he* should do this great work!' Or, 'Can such a poor worthless fellow, such a *dead dog*' (ὁ κύνων ὁ τεθνηκώς, *Sept.*) 'perform such mighty actions? thou fillest me with surprise.' And that this is the true sense, his immediate murder of his master on his return fully proves. 'Our common version of these words of Hazael,' as Mr. Patten observes, 'has stood in the front of many a fine declamation,

utterly wide of his real sentiment. His exclamation was not the result of *horror*, his expression has no tincture of it; but of the unexpected glimpse of a crown! The prophet's answer is plainly calculated to satisfy the astonishment he had excited. A *dog* bears not, in Scripture, the character of a *cruel*, but of a *despicable*, animal; nor does he who is shocked with its barbarity call it a *GREAT* deed."—*Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary.*

NOTE 84, page 301.—*Geographical Extent of the Kingdom of Judah.*

It is questionable how far the terms, "Judah and Benjamin," as applied to the territorial extent of the kingdom of Judah, and "the ten tribes," as indicating the geographical extent of the kingdom of Israel, are correct. We have no precise information in Holy Scripture on the subject; and an inspection of the map would lead to the impression that much of the territory which had been originally allotted to Simeon and Dan, was annexed to the kingdom of Judah. It is remarkable that in all the wars which took place between these rival states, we never hear of any warlike operations being carried on between them to the south or west of Benjamin or Judah. Nor is it probable that a small population so isolated, whatever their inclinations might have been, could have maintained their position as an integral part of the kingdom of Israel.

Whatever difficulty there may be in defining the exact original frontier line between these two nations, it is certain that, during the reign of Rehoboam, some portion of the land allotted to Dan was occupied as a part of the kingdom of Judah; for Ajalon and Gath, which belonged to that tribe, were fortified by this king, as important points of defense, and were therefore included in his dominions. And as the latter of these cities was but about twelve miles from the sea, it will be admitted that, for all national and military purposes, the territory of Judah must be considered as including the northern part of Palestine from the sea to the Jordan. It is therefore probable, that these kingdoms were originally divided by a line which, commencing at the Jordan, just to the south of Jericho, proceeded nearly in a westerly direction between Ramah and Bethel, thence near the vale of Ajalon, until, passing to the north of Ekron in the same direction, it reached the sea.

NOTE 85, page 306.—*High Places.*

A COMPARISON of 2 Chron. xiv, 3, 4, with 1 Kings xv, 14, has been supposed to justify the conclusion, that there were two kinds of high places; one of which, being prostituted to actual idolatry, was therefore destroyed; while others, retaining their patriarchal character, were suffered to remain. It is, however, by no means clear that this hypothesis accounts for the apparent discrepancy which these scriptures exhibit; and it seems probable that, although idolatry was prohibited, and everything relating to it destroyed, the places which had been appropriated to these abominations, even when dismantled, were allowed to remain.

It is scarcely possible to form an adequate conception of the extent to which high places were invested with a sacred character in the ancient world. To trace the origin, progress, and consequences of this superstition, is to investigate and unravel the religious history of all antiquity. Our limits will only allow a glance at the subject. All these sacred places unquestionably arose from the universally admitted fact, that the terrestrial heaven, the "garden of delight," which God planted, wherein he walked and conversed with our first parents, was situated on a lofty eminence in the north of Asia. And as all the revelations of divine truth, and all the communications of grace, had for their object the restoration of man to the state of happiness and intercourse with God which he enjoyed in this abode of bliss;

so the consummation of his religious hopes was commonly regarded as a restoration to Paradise. Hence, using popular language, the Lord said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Luke xxiii, 43. And St. Paul speaks of a translation into the third heaven, as "being caught up into Paradise." 2 Cor. xii, 2-4. In the same manner the final conquest of the Christian is to be rewarded with access to the "tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." Rev. ii, 7.

This religious reference to Paradise also most distinctly recognized its elevated situation: in this respect the idea was greatly strengthened by the fact, that the ark rested on a mountain very near the site of Paradise: and, consequently, in process of time, Ararat became confounded or identified with Eden. Both belonged to a common father at the beginning, or apparent beginning, of the world. Both were mounts of salvation, or divine favor. Both were hills of the sacred tree; the one of the real tree of life, the other of its symbol, the tree of peace and union. Both were seats of the cherubim, and the glorious presence; the one which stood before the garden, the other which dwelt in the house of Noah, or in the tabernacle of Shem. And hence pious patriarchs selected elevated places, and especially the tops of hills, as the most suitable localities for holy worship; and hence, also, throughout the Scriptures, the special prominence given to mountains, as appropriated to religious objects, and as symbolical of salvation. When Abraham was commanded to offer up Isaac, Jehovah said unto him, "Get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Gen. xxii, 2. The site of Jerusalem is spoken of by inspiration as symbolical at once of Paradise, and of deliverance by the promised Redeemer: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." Psalm xlviii, 2. "His foundation is in the holy mountains." Psalm lxxxvii, 1. And when the prophet, by a bold and beautiful figure, sets forth the universal triumphs of grace, he does so by saying, "*The mountain* of the house of the Lord shall be established in the *top of the mountains*, and it shall be exalted *above the hills*; and people shall flow unto it." Micah iv, 1. And, not to notice a multitude of Scriptures which might be quoted illustrative of this point, we pass on to the glorious visions of the Apocalypse; and here, when John saw the "great city, the holy Jerusalem," he was "carried away in the spirit to a *great and high mountain*." Here, too, was a "river of water of life," and "the tree of life;" (Rev. xxi, 10; xxii, 1, 2;) all allusive to Paradise, and prefiguring the restoration of man to its holiness and joy.

When, therefore, it is seen that a restoration to Paradise, as to a holy mountain, enters so largely into the symbolical language of Scripture, as illustrative of the objects of redemption and the triumphs of grace, we need not wonder that, as idolatry prevailed, this idea should have been prostituted to the purposes of superstition. Here quotation is superfluous; all Heathen antiquity is full of these allusions. It is now most amply ascertained, that the sacred hills of the Heathens were imitations of the paradisiacal mount, and allusive to its recovery. And, as in flat and low countries the inhabitants could not obtain opportunities for indulging in the selection of such elevated places, they supplied the deficiency by the construction of mounds, *tumuli*, and colossal erections. This was unquestionably the origin of the Tower of Babel, of the pyramids of Memphis, of the pagodas of Hindostan, and of the pyramidal temples of Buddha and of Mexico. These everywhere became seats of idolatrous worship and profane rites. Hence when the Israelites went to take possession of Canaan, they were commanded to "cut down their groves," to "destroy their altars," and to "burn their groves with fire." Exod. xxxiv, 13; Deut. vii, 5; xii, 3. These commands were partially obeyed. Yet, although the Hebrews were forbidden to sacrifice except in the place which the

Lord should choose, (Deut. xii, 13, 14,) after they had occupied the land, the strict letter of this law was not observed; and as long as Jehovah alone was worshiped, the practice does not appear to have been censured, at least before the building of the temple. But after that sanctuary was consecrated, and when almost all the worship performed elsewhere was corrupted with idolatry, then worshipping on these high places was forbidden; and a public discontinuance of this practice became a certain test of worshipers of Jehovah, whilst a support of it indicated at least a leaning to idolatry.

The worship and sacred rites celebrated by the disobedient Hebrews on their high places, fully prove that they arose out of a corrupted tradition of primitive truth associated with the worship of the powers of nature, and of hero-gods. These high places are condemned by the prophets as "gardens." Isaiah i, 29. In these gardens "sacrifices" were offered; (Isaiah lxv, 3;) and, as if to prevent the possibility of mistaking the paradisiacal allusion in these gardens, there stood "one tree in the midst." Isaiah lxvi, 17. And it is at least doubtful whether, as Amos alludes to the idolatry of Bethel under the term *Bikath-Aven*, he may not identify the sanctuary which stood on these high places as "the house" or temple "of Eden," Amos i, 5. In these high places they "burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven." Here also they kept horses and chariots dedicated to the sun, and images. 2 Kings xxiii, 4-14.

Yet it must not be inferred from this, that these high places were all situated on hills, or mountains. On the contrary, as Strabo informs us that, in his day, "all sacred places, even where no trees were to be seen, were still called groves," so it is more than probable that all places where this kind of idolatrous worship was conducted, whether on high hills or artificial mounds in the open country, or in buildings adapted to the purpose in towns and cities, were called *high places*. This conjecture seems established by the fact, that there were "high places of the gates that were in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on a man's left hand at the gate of the city." 2 Kings xxiii, 8.

From the results of this investigation, it seems probable that the reason why all the high places were not destroyed, did not arise from their difference of character, so much as from their difference of position and proprietorship. A pious king would prohibit this idolatry everywhere; but as some of the princes and powerful heads of the people might have such places on their private property, the zealous daring of the sovereign did but seldom lead him to destroy them, as Josiah did the high place of Bethel; (2 Kings xxiii, 15;) and, consequently, as soon as the interdiction was removed, the evil arose again in all its abominable impurity, to shed its malign influence over the country.—(See Bridges' *Testimony of Profane History*; Faber's *Pagan Idolatry*, vol. iii, p. 197).

NOTE 86, page 309.—*The Burning for Asa.*

THIS passage has led to considerable difference of opinion; and it is still a question whether the body of Asa was burned, or whether the burning only refers to the spices and drugs. We know it was a very ancient practice to embalm dead bodies; and this the Israelites might have borrowed from the Egyptians: it is certain that they placed spices and other odoriferous substances in contact with the dead body. But we have no proof that the course adopted in the case of Asa was ever a Jewish practice. As, therefore, it is well known that the ancient Greeks and Romans burned the dead bodies of their great men, and threw abundance of frankincense, myrrh, and cassia into the flames, it appears most probable that Asa ordered this Gentile course to be taken in respect of his body; and that therefore the sacred writer records the fact as a manifest innovation on the usages of the nation.

NOTE 87, page 315.—*The Letter of Elijah*.

THE text of the Hebrew Bible, as well as that of our authorized translation, says, that this letter was written by Elijah the prophet; and this reading is sustained by all ancient copies and oriental versions. But as Elijah had been translated three or four years before the death of Jehoshaphat, and Elisha his successor was at this time the prophet of Jehovah unto Israel, this account has greatly perplexed commentators: and it has been generally supposed, that the name Elijah has been inserted here instead of Elisha, and that this epistle was written and sent by the latter prophet. This opinion is supported by Kennicott, Horsley, Geddes, Booth, and Whiston, the translator of Josephus, and has obtained considerable currency. Yet, notwithstanding the authority of these great names, there are weighty reasons against this interpretation. It must be admitted that the change of one name for another in the sacred narrative, except in the case of a very obvious error, and with unquestionable reasons for the alteration, cannot be warranted. Here, however, those reasons are wanting. The author of the Book of Chronicles, where this text occurs, never mentions the prophet Elisha: his name does not occur in the book. It appears, therefore, most unlikely, that the writer should have intended to insert this prophet's name in this doubtful passage.

Upon a careful consideration of the whole case, we think it most probable that Elijah wrote this letter. No man was better acquainted with the evil influence of the house of Ahab: he lived to see a daughter of this house married to Jehoram, and this prince associated with his father in the government. It is not, therefore, incredible, that with prophetic vision, seeing the course this prince would take when invested with supreme power, Elijah might have written this epistle, and have left it to be delivered when the character of Jehoram should have been developed. Kimchi advocated this explanation. Bishop Patrick shows that it agrees with the grammatical construction of the passage, and Dr. Adam Clarke could "see no solid reason against this opinion," which, in our judgment, affords the best elucidation of the text.

NOTE 88, page 328.—*The Sacrifice of Children to Moloch*.

MUCH learned labor has been employed to persuade the world, that this offering of children to Moloch was a mere lustration, a carrying of children over burning coals, passing them between two fires, or hurrying them through a flickering flame. It is thus endeavored to show that there was no exposure of the life of the child; that the whole was a mere ceremony of dedicating the child to the idol; and that, therefore, the wickedness of the act consisted in its impiety, but that it was free from cruelty or murder.

The case is, however, too important to be lightly dismissed, inasmuch as it has a bearing upon the religion of the Hebrews at this time: and we must therefore endeavor to ascertain the meaning of the Scripture narrative. There is, then, one important point, which is placed beyond the reach of doubt: the Hebrews in this case did "after the abominations of the Heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel." 2 Chron. xxviii, 3. This statement materially narrows the question, and shuts out all consideration of the superior cultivation, humanity, and religion of the Israelites. Notwithstanding all these, the sacred record distinctly alleges, that what the Heathen had done, the Hebrews now did. But we are plainly told that the nations which had been cast out before Israel had been guilty of all these things which are prohibited. Lev. xviii, 24.

We have, then, to ascertain the nature and extent of this abomination. And if the plain teaching of Scripture is taken as an authority, the case cannot admit of a doubt. It is said that "they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood." Psalm cvi, 37, 38. Again: "They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire." Jer. vii, 31. "Thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children?" Ezek. xvi, 20, 21. "Blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them." Ezek. xxiii, 37. "For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it." Verse 39.

A critical investigation of the terms employed would add to the strength of the argument; as, for instance, it might be shown that *בָּהֵן גַּר* *bāhn-gar*, the word employed 2 Chron. xxviii, 3. "And burnt his children in the fire," strictly means, "to consume, to burn, to clear off." But this is not necessary; the texts quoted, showing, as they do, that these children's blood was shed, that they were slain, that they were burned, prevents the possibility of our believing that all the writers are speaking of a harmless lustration, a mere rite which inflicted no injury.

NOTE 89, page 329.—*The Promise of Immanuel.*

It has been a grave question with critics, how, if this prediction was intended to be a sign, it could refer to Christ. On this question two theories have obtained. The first is, that this prophecy refers only to Christ, and thus predicted the perpetuity of the house of David, until Messiah should come, who, being GOD WITH US, should have the government and bear rule world without end. Others suppose that, while this prediction, in its ultimate object and highest meaning, referred to the Messiah, it was accomplished in a lower and subordinate sense by some female, then a virgin, afterward bearing a child, and thus affording an immediate sign or seal of Divine interposition. We should prefer the first of these opinions but for the subject in the beginning of the eighth chapter, which seems to render the second probable. However this may be, the prophecy stood out in all after-ages as a great way-mark in the annals of the world. The line of David was preserved, in all the vicissitudes of successive revolutions, captivities, and disasters, until a virgin bore a son who was called Immanuel; and then it sank into oblivion, and perished from the knowledge of men.

NOTE 90, page 331.—*The Connection of the Sacred History with that of Assyria.*

As we propose, in the third and concluding volume of "Sacred Annals," not only to discuss the history and religion of the Gentile nations, but to treat of their several points of connection and intercourse with the Hebrews, we have here given only a passing reference to the inroads of the Assyrian and other powers, which from time to time were at war, or had political relations, with Judah and Israel. It will, however, now be necessary to observe that, for many centuries before this period, Assyria had been the predominant power in Asia; that, notwithstanding Babylon and Media existed as important provinces under their own kings, about B. C. 700 these nations revolted from the dominion of Assyria, and after a struggle, which lasted a century, with varied fortunes, these allied states succeeded in destroying Nineveh, and dividing the immense Assyrian empire between them;—Media taking all the dominions east of the river Tigris, and Babylon those to the west.

NOTE 91, page 334.—*The Language employed by the Hebrews in speaking of Deity.*

BISHOP RUSSELL has cited the latter part of this inspired communication, in proof of the opinion, that the language used in reference to God, when considered as the tutelary Deity of Israel, was very deficient in dignity. On this occasion, it appears that the learned and usually clear-sighted prelate has made more than one serious error. Let the whole passage be read, (Isa. xxxvii, 22–35,) and we are bold to say that it will stand without discredit by the side of any piece of lofty eloquence or fervid poetry that can be produced. But how does it appear that God was regarded on this occasion merely as the tutelary Deity of Israel? Hezekiah did not pray to him in this character: he addressed him as the “living God, who made heaven and earth;” (verses 16, 17;) and the prophet, when calling him “the Holy One of Israel,” uses a title which in the Scriptures most emphatically points out the eternal and almighty Jehovah.

NOTE 92, page 334.—*The miraculous Destruction of the Assyrian Army.*

It is now generally believed that this fearful destruction was effected by the agency of one of those hot malignant winds which frequently sweep across the deserts of the East, shedding ruin and death upon man and beast. The terms of the prophecy, “I will send a *blast* upon him,” (2 Kings xix, 7,) together with the fact, that the text in Jeremiah (li, 1) which in our translation of the Scriptures reads, “a destroying wind,” is given in the Arabic version, a “hot pestilential wind,” strongly support this opinion. It should, however, be always remembered, that, whatever natural agent was employed, the infliction was immediately from God. The explicit prediction of this terrible destruction, its fearful magnitude, the ruin being greater than the annals of the world in any other instance ascribe to the destructive simoom, and the occurrence of this calamity precisely at the time and place which fully accomplished the predicted purpose of Jehovah,—all prove that it was a miraculous interposition of God. And, whatever skeptics and rationalists may think on such a subject, it seems to our mind more sublime, more in accordance with the infinite greatness, wisdom, and power of Jehovah, that some natural agent should be sent forth armed with boundless might by the fiat of God, and prostrate a mighty army in instant death, than that, as Dr. Johnson forcibly observed, an angel should go “about with a sword in his hand stabbing them one by one.”

It is worthy of observation that traditions of this miraculous intervention appear to have been preserved in Egypt, which, equally with Judah, was thus delivered from threatened ruin for several centuries afterward. Herodotus was in that country about two hundred years after this event, collecting materials for his great historical work. He was there told that the king of Egypt, being in great fear and perplexity on account of the approach of Sennacherib, repaired to the shrine of his god, where he lamented his danger, and that in a dream he was assured of deliverance, which accordingly came to pass. When the Assyrian army came to Pelusium, so immense a number of mice infested by night the enemy's camp, that their quivers and bows, together with what secured their shields to their arms, were gnawed to pieces. In the morning the host, finding themselves without arms, fled in confusion, and lost great numbers of men. The father of history adds, that this remarkable event was commemorated by a statue: “There is now in the temple of Vulcan a marble statue of this king, having a mouse in his hand, and with this inscription: ‘Whoever thou art, learn from my fortune to reverence the gods.’” *Euterpe*, cxli. Although the devotedness of Egypt to animal worship led them to disguise and corrupt this

tradition, yet the great fact of a remarkable deliverance by Divine interposition was clearly recognized, and its remembrance carefully preserved.

NOTE 93, page 336.—*Sacred Groves.*

MUCH that has been said in a preceding note respecting high places, is equally applicable to groves. They arose together from the same cause, and were alike perverted to idolatrous purposes under the same influence. This has been already shown. It may be further stated, that when idolatry was fully developed as a system, and filled Jerusalem and the land of Judah with its absurd and impure rites, both these terms, "high places," and "groves," were perverted from their original meaning, and applied to erections and things constructed by human art and labor for the purposes of idolatry. It may not now be possible to trace precisely the changes which took place in the application of these words, or to give any distinct idea of the different things to which they were applied in the last ages of Jewish idolatry. But it seems probable that as erections called "high places" were made in the towns and cities on which to celebrate the profane rites that had previously been performed on the tops of hills; in like manner, closets, shrines, or other receptacles, were made, in which the idol was deposited which had previously occupied the sacred grove on the hill: and as the most impure and obscene rites were perpetrated in sacred groves, it is not improbable that these artificial substitutes for them might be adapted also to such purposes. Whether this explanation be regarded as satisfactory or not, it is certain that when the idolatry reigned in Jerusalem in its greatest plenitude, the term which we render "groves" was applied to something that could be made, set up, placed in a building, cut down, put away, burnt, reduced to powder. And hence we read that Manasseh made a grove in the house of the Lord, (2 Kings xxi, 7,) and that Josiah "brought out the grove from the house of the Lord, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people." Chap. xxiii, 6. A careful consideration of the whole subject appears to confirm the opinion of Dr. Lee, that "by the term מִזְבֵּחַ, the *shrine* of an idol, and not the idol itself, is meant;" and that, as it is certain the phrase was applied in early times to a grove of trees, it seems probable that its meaning and application were changed in the manner we have described. (See Lee's Hebrew Lexicon on the word.)

NOTE 94, page 338.—*The Chronology of the Deliverance of Jerusalem by Judith.*

DR. PRIDEAUX, Archbishop Usher, Potavius, and Huetius, place this event in the reign of Manasseh. Jackson supposes it to have occurred in the twelfth year of Josiah; Whiston, in the time of Darius Hystaspes; Dr. Hales, in the first year of Josiah; whilst Ludovicus Capellus regards the whole story as a fiction. Amid such conflicting views, it may be presumptuous to pronounce an opinion; but from a careful investigation of the subject, it appears that the deliverance of Judah by Judith was a real historical event, and that it took place either during the reign of Amon, or very early in that of Josiah. The great objection to receive this opinion, which the general tenor of the history seems strongly to recommend, arises from those clauses which speak of the great age of Judith, and the undisturbed state of Judah until her death. This statement, together with that made, chap. v, 18, must be regarded as erroneous. Dr. Hales has in this case afforded us the surest guidance.

NOTE 95, page 342.—*The Route of Pharaoh-Necho to Carchemish.*

IN stating our belief that, in this instance, the Egyptian army was taken by sea to Cesarea, we are guided solely by what appears to be an inevitable induction from the facts, as given in the sacred narrative. It is well known that Megiddo stands on the great road from Egypt through Gaza to Damascus. But if the Egyptian army had taken this course, which would have been the best overland route, it can scarcely be conceived that the king of Judah would have allowed them to range through the whole length of his kingdom, and then to have marched out and given them battle: this appears to be as opposed to the tenor of the history, as it seems unreasonable. Hence the supposition, that Pharaoh saved his soldiers the march over the desert and through Judea, by taking them by sea to Cesarea. As it is evident that he wished to avoid a conflict with Josiah, this would be another inducement to his doing so; but Josiah regarded it as his duty to resist the march, and sacrificed his life to this conviction.

NOTE 96, page 349.—*The Chronology of Daniel.* (Chapter i, 1.)

MUCH criticism has been expended on this text, on account of its supposed contradiction of the other parts of the sacred narrative, especially of Jeremiah xxv, 1; Daniel apparently placing the first year of Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of Jehoiakim, and Jeremiah explicitly stating that it was contemporaneous with the fourth year of that king of Judah. Several important emendations of the language of Daniel have been suggested, some of which injuriously affect the sense, and, in fact, give it another meaning. The chronological difficulties in this part of the history are many and great; and it may not be possible, by any scheme, to obviate all objection: yet it does not seem a difficult task to harmonize these prophets with each other, and with the history.

Jackson and Hales agree in placing the commencement of the reign of Jehoiakim about July, B. C. 608; and that of Nebuchadnezzar, January, B. C. 604: consequently, the first year of the latter would begin in the fourth year of the former, agreeably to the precise declaration of Jeremiah. But, then, it is said that the text of Daniel cannot be true. We ask, Why? It does not say that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar was coincident with the third year of Jehoiakim, as seems to be supposed. It is much wiser to endeavor to understand the sacred text than to mend it. It is universally admitted that, during the lifetime of his father, Nebuchadnezzar was sent by him, with the title of king, at the head of an army, to chastise and recover to his dominion those nations which had revolted from him, and formed an alliance with Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt. It was during this expedition that the Rechabites, fearing the Chaldeans, took refuge in Jerusalem, and that Daniel and his companions were carried into captivity. While employed on this service, Nebuchadnezzar heard of the death of his father; and immediately, with a few followers, hastened across the desert, the nearest way to Babylon, to take possession of the kingdom, leaving his army and captives to follow him.

Now, if we suppose that, on this occasion, Nebuchadnezzar appeared before Jerusalem prior to July, B. C. 605, the text of Daniel is fully sustained. Then, allowing about six months to elapse from this time to the death of Nabopolassar, when Nebuchadnezzar became sovereign of the empire, the assertion of Jeremiah is justified. This, in all probability, was the order of events. (Jackson's *Chronological Antiquities*, vol. i, p. 188; Hales's *Analysis*, vol. ii, p. 439; Prideaux's *Connection*, vol. i, p. 73; Berosus *apud* Josephum, *Antiq.*, lib. x, cap. xi, *et Contra Apionem*, lib. 1.)

NOTE 97, page 352.—*Chronological Arrangement of Nebuchadnezzar's Dreams.*

WE have, in this instance, been compelled to depart from the common reading of Daniel ii, 1, which places the first of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams in the second year of his reign. The following reasons had led to this course: 1. These young men were taken to Babylon just as Nebuchadnezzar began to reign: Daniel was, therefore, not educated and placed among the wise men until three years afterward. 2. At the time of this dream Daniel was fully enrolled among the wise men, living in his own house, and was immediately afterward made *archimagus*, or chief of the wise men. 3. Daniel, when expounding this dream, calls Nebuchadnezzar "king of kings;" a title not suitable to him in the second year from the death of his father. It has been found impossible to resist this evidence; and, therefore, we have followed Josephus, Petavius, Jackson, and Hales, in placing this event in the second year from his conquest of Egypt. (Josephus' *Antiquities*, b. x, chap. x, sect. 3; Jackson's *Chronological Antiquities*, vol. i, p. 394; Hales's *Analysis*, vol. ii, p. 456.)

NOTE 98, page 357.—*The Death of Belshazzar.*

THE brief account of these events given in Holy Scripture does not state by what means this king was slain. But commentators generally, guided by Xenophon and Josephus, have supposed that, on this occasion, Cyrus took Babylon, and the Chaldean king lost his life in the conflict. It is, however, impossible to receive this account without altogether renouncing the much weightier authority of the Chaldean records, agreeing as they do in most material points with Holy Scripture.

From these records it appears, that the king who reigned at Babylon when that city was taken by Cyrus was a Babylonian nobleman, "who had no connection with the royal family." Yet Daniel most distinctly calls Belshazzar the son (or grandson) of Nebuchadnezzar.

These same records declare that, when Cyrus took Babylon, the king that then reigned was not slain, but taken alive, and afterward made governor of Casmania.

Further: it is certain that when the city was taken, no other sovereign reigned in Media; Darius the Mede could not *then* have taken the kingdom. Nor can the romantic *Cyropædia* of Xenophon be placed in comparison with the authority of the Chaldean annals, copied and preserved by Berosus and Megasthenes.

Besides, the Scriptural account of Belshazzar's feast is altogether at variance with the idea of the city being besieged. A thousand lords could scarcely meet at this banquet, unless some had come from the provinces: and it is remarkable that, in the address of Daniel to the king, he is spoken to as a sovereign, not driven to straits, and shut up in his capital; but as one possessing power and glory, and whose sin was pride. The history of the event, then, appears to be this: Belshazzar succeeded his father, and, after a short and cruel reign, was slain by conspirators at the impious feast, leaving a son, a boy, who survived him but nine months, and, consequently, is not noticed in the brief Scripture account. Darius, king of Media, being the heir to the throne, from his being the queen-mother's brother, (the family of Nebuchadnezzar being extinct,) therefore took the kingdom, his claim being generally acknowledged. This sovereign, having himself assumed the supreme government, appointed Nabonadius, a nobleman, governor of Babylon: this chief revolted, declared himself independent, was conquered by Cyrus, who took the city in the manner described; but then, as a further proof that Belshazzar was not at that time the sovereign, Nabonadius, the king, was not slain, but fled to Borsippus, where he surrendered to Cyrus, who forgave and made him governor of

Casmania. (See "Remains" of Berosus and Megasthenes in Cory's *Fragmenta*, pp. 40-46; Hales's *Analysis*, vol. ii, p. 463; Jackson's *Chronological Antiquities*, vol. i, pp. 406-410.)

NOTE 99, page 382.—*The Vision of Ezekiel.*

THE important revelations made to the prophet in this vision have invested all the circumstances with great interest. It has been a question raised by some critics, whether the prophet was really transported to Jerusalem on this occasion. From the statement that this was done "in the visions of God," it may be understood, that these impressions were made on the mind of Ezekiel by an overpowering Divine influence. This would certainly account for the accuracy and extent of the revelation. In this manner Elisha was *with* Gehazi when he received Naaman's present, and heard the words which were spoken in the king of Syria's bedchamber. Lowth is, however, of opinion, that a real translation of the prophet took place from Chaldea to Jerusalem. He regards this interpretation as "confirmed 'by the Spirit's lifting him up between heaven and earth, and bringing him to Jerusalem,' and afterward 'carrying him back into Chaldea,' xi, 24."—*Notes* on chap. iii, 8.

But, whether the prophet was actually taken to Jerusalem, or had the scenes supernaturally impressed upon his imagination, there can be no doubt that those which he depicts in the prophecy are faithful representations of what actually took place. We know that the temple was frequently profaned by the introduction of heathen altars and images: we see here the extent to which this profane practice was carried.

Bishop Warburton (*Divine Legation*, book iv, sect. 6) has shown at length that the chamber of imagery, which makes so prominent a part of this vision, is an exact representation of the mysteries of Isis and Osiris; and later researches have confirmed the opinion of this learned writer as to the Egyptian character of this scene. Every one who has read the works of Wilkinson, Belzoni, Richardson, and others, will perceive the close resemblance which it bears to the outer walls and sanctuaries, and the hieroglyphical figures that distinguished the ancient mythology of Egypt.

"It is to be observed, that when the prophet is bid to turn from the Egyptian to the Phenician rites, he is then said to look toward the north, which was the situation of Phenicia with regard to Jerusalem; consequently, he before stood southward, the situation of Egypt with regard to the same place. And when from thence he is bid to turn into the inner court of the Lord's house, to see the Persian rites; this was east, the situation of Persia. With such exactness is the representation of the whole vision conducted. Again: as the mysterious rites of Egypt are said, agreeably to their usage, to be held in secret, by their **ELDERS AND RULERS** only; so the Phenician rites, for the same reason, are shown as they were celebrated by the **PEOPLE** in open day. And the Persian worship of the sun, which was performed by the magi, is here said to be observed by the **PRIESTS** alone, five and twenty, with their faces toward the east." Thus rigidly exact in every particular is this wonderful description.

NOTE 100, page 392.—*When were the Discourses of the Prophets written and collected?*

THIS is a very important inquiry, and one upon which it is essential to form an opinion, in order to estimate the religious advantages and means of information possessed by the Hebrew people in this part of their career.

It does not appear that the early prophets committed any of their discourses to writing: their predictions, being only or chiefly of a temporary nature, are inserted

in the historical books, together with their fulfillment. But when the continued idolatry and wickedness of the Hebrew people exposed them to those extensive Divine judgments which resulted in their national ruin, then it became necessary to place before the public mind permanent revelations of the Divine will, that transgressors might be made aware of the consequences of their crimes, and that the faithful few might have Divine consolation. Before this time, the living oral speech of the prophets was the means of instruction and warning: hence Isaiah was commanded to "cry aloud, spare not, lift up his voice like a trumpet, and show the people of God their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. lviii, 1. But other and weightier reasons for committing prophecy to writing are obvious, after the object of prophetic inspiration had been greatly enlarged. Hitherto it had mainly referred to cases of local and temporary interest, such as national dangers and deliverances; but, from this time, while constantly referring to the present circumstances and temporal condition of the elect people, the great object of prophecy was the promised Redeemer. His person, and character, and work, resulting in the establishment of a glorious kingdom of grace, form the great theme of the sacred seers. Prophecy was, therefore, henceforth designed to form an integral and important part of the oracles of Divine truth, and was, consequently, written and distributed among the people.

As there is no explicit declaration on the pages of inspiration that these prophetic revelations were committed to writing by the prophets whose names they bear, it will be necessary to collect the evidence requisite to establish this fact, from various sources. In doing this we may refer to the several prophets in succession.

To begin with Isaiah. He was commanded to write at least a part of his inspired communication (chap. viii, 1) during the course of his ministration. He was afterward required to seal up a portion of his prophecy, until it should be verified. Verse 16. This prophet is repeatedly quoted by Jeremiah, who began to minister about seventy years after he had finished his course. For instance, the words of Isaiah, chap. li, 15, are given by Jeremiah, chap. xxxi, 35. "The image of the cup of fury," in Isaiah li, 17, is, in Jeremiah xxv, 15-29, transformed into a symbolic act, according to his custom of embodying the imagery of earlier prophets, and especially that of Isaiah. In order to prove that other prophets also made a similar use of Isaiah, we refer to Zeph. ii, 15, where we find Isaiah's address to Babylon applied to Nineveh: "Therefore hear now this, thou that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me," &c. Isa. xlvii, 8. Zephaniah has here even repeated the characteristic and difficult word *יִצְחָק*. Küper (p. 138) has clearly demonstrated that the passage cannot be original in Zephaniah. The words of Isaiah, chap. lii, 7, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" are repeated by Nahum in chap. i, 15; and what he adds, "The wicked shall no more pass through thee," agrees remarkably with Isaiah lii, 1: "From henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Nahum iii, 7, contains an allusion to Isaiah li, 19. And besides these references to passages in this prophet which have, by some scholars, been esteemed doubtful, there are others equally striking. Compare Nahum i, 13, with Isaiah x, 27; and Jeremiah l, li, with the predictions against Babylon, in Isaiah, and it will be admitted that these numerous coincidences of thought, figure, and language can only be accounted for by supposing that Isaiah committed his predictions to writing, and that they were carefully studied by succeeding prophets. This is further confirmed by the assertion of Josephus, that Cyrus read the prophecy of Isaiah concerning himself. (*Antiquities*, book xi, chap. i, sect. 2.)

In the case of Jeremiah there is less difficulty, as it is certain that several collections of his prophecies were made during his life. The first that we hear of, was, by God's

command, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Chap. xxxvi, 2. This contained all the prophecies he had published to that time, as well against other nations as against the Jews. The former of these, in our present collection, are put by themselves, at the end of the book, from chapter xlv to the end of the list; but in the present copies of the Septuagint they follow immediately after the thirteenth verse of the twenty-fifth chapter. As Jeremiah himself was "shut up" at this time, Baruch was deputed to write all the words that the prophet had spoken unto him, and to read them publicly on the fast-day. This collection having been destroyed by the violence of the king, another copy was made, precisely like the former, only that "there were added besides many like words."

Lowth regards the passage, chap. i, 3, as referring to another collection, which he supposes to have been made by writing the prophecies "without any regard to the order of time, just as we find the collection of Psalms was made. To this was added another collection of Jeremiah's prophecies, published about the time of his going down into Egypt, contained in chap. xlii-xliv, at the end of which Esdras, or some others after the captivity, who undertook the completing of the Scripture canon, added those prophecies which Jeremy had spoken against the Gentiles, thinking it most proper to put them by themselves, because they treat of a different subject from the rest of the book; and one of them, namely, that against Elam, (chap. xlix, 34,) bears date after the first collection made by Jeremy himself, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign. The works of this prophet having been so frequently written and published, we need not wonder that they should be found among the books studied by Daniel, and that he should have learned from them the duration of the captivity, Daniel ix, 2; especially as a part of these writings, at least, was specially sent to Babylon, and published there. Jer. li, 63."

In reference to Ezekiel, an eminent German critic, having asserted that it was the practice of the prophets to record their predictions, immediately proceeds to observe: "With regard to Ezekiel, the accuracy of the dates with which the separate sections are furnished confirms this view. From these it is clear that it was the business of the prophet himself to preserve accurately the day on which he received his revelations;" while "the peculiar tendency of Ezekiel to set forth his visions with a remarkably rich detail, and to finish them even to the minutest touch, shows that the impressions of the revelations received, and of the rapture, were yet too strong and fresh in the mind of the prophet for any considerable interval of time to have elapsed between the moment of the conception and that of the record; otherwise, we must suppose a subsequent artistic decoration, purely from the fancy, against which we have already guarded."

Josephus asserts that Daniel wrote his predictions, and left them in writing. (*Antiquities*, book x, chap. xi, sect. 7.)

Our limits forbid a more extended investigation, or this kind of evidence might be greatly increased in respect of the sacred writers already mentioned, and be extended to the minor prophets. A few brief observations must close this note. "There is evidence to prove that the later prophets sedulously read the writings of the earlier, and that a prophetic canon existed before the present was formed." This in itself is sufficient to show that the early prophecies must have been written at the time of, or soon after, their delivery. But, further: Jeremiah makes the prophecy of Obadiah the ground-work of his own: yet the latter prophet exercised his ministry in the early part of the life of Jeremiah. Isaiah quotes from Micah: yet they were contemporary. Zechariah explicitly alludes "to the words which the Lord has spoken to earlier prophets." Chap. i, 4, 6; vii, 7, 12. And we have, in Jeremiah xxvi, 1-19, a clear proof of the exact knowledge which the better classes of people in Jerusalem had of predictions which were uttered seventy or one hun-

dred years before. The "elders of the land" (verses 18, 19) could promptly quote the words of Micah, iii, 12: they must therefore have had his prophecy in writing. As all the prophets, however they might have been opposed during their ministry, were recognized as inspired men, it is very probable that the old Jewish tradition is true, which says, "that all the canonical books, as well as the law, were put into the side of the ark." But, however this may be, it seems certain that copies of them were carefully made by the scribes, and distributed among the heads of the people. (Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature, articles *Prophecy*, *Isaiah*, and *Jeremiah*; Horne's Introduction, vol. ii, pp. 253-289; Haverneck's Introduction to Ezekiel; Lowth's Introduction to Jeremiah.)

NOTE 101, page 393.—*Prophetic Vision.*

THE prophets "did not prophesy in a state of calculating reflection, but ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ φερόμενοι, 'borne along by the Holy Ghost;'" the objects offering themselves to their spiritual vision. On that account they are frequently called "seers," to whom futurity appears as present. Even the Hebrew Grammar has long ago recognized this fact in the term *præterita prophetica*. These prophetic preter-tenses indicate a time ideally past, in contradistinction to the time which is really past. Every chapter in Isaiah furnishes examples of this grammatical fact. Even in the first there is contained a remarkable instance of it. Interpreters frequently went astray, because they misunderstood the nature of prophecy, and took the *præterita prophetica* for real preterites; consequently, they could only by some inconsistency escape from Eichhorn's opinion, that the prophecies were veiled historical descriptions. Prophetism places us *in medias res*, or, rather, the prophet is placed *in medias res*. The Spirit of God elevates him above the *terra firma* of common reality, and of common perception. The prophet beholds, as connected, things externally separated, if they are linked together by their internal character. The prophet beholds what is distant as near, if its hidden basis, although concealed from the eyes of flesh, already exists. This was, for instance, the case with Israel's captivity and deliverance. Neither happened by chance. Both events proceeded from the justice and mercy of God, a living knowledge of which necessarily produced the beholding knowledge of the same. The prophet views things in the light of that God who calls the things that are not as though they were, and to whom the future is present." —Hengstenberg on *Isaiah*, in Kitto's Cyclopædia.

NOTE 102, page 396.—*The Rationale of the Golden Image.*

As the interpretation which is given in the text of this remarkable case differs from that usually assigned by commentators, it becomes necessary to state, as fully as our limits allow, the reasons which have led us to give a different explanation of this historical incident. The erection of the golden image has been generally regarded simply as a contribution by Nebuchadnezzar of a new element to the idolatrous worship of Babylon. As the height stated by Daniel has been considered to be disproportionate to its breadth, it has been supposed that it could not have been an image in human form; but this difficulty is removed by the obvious solution that the statue was placed upon a pedestal, and that the height of both is included in the threescore cubits. It is a remarkable circumstance that when Xerxes spoiled the temple of Bel in Babylon, he found, according to Diodorus Siculus, a statue of massy gold, forty feet high, which Dr. Prideaux conjectures to have been the identical golden image of Nebuchadnezzar. But if this was only an image of Bel, or of any other Babylonish deity, intended to be inaugurated at the great assembly which was held

in the plains of Dura, then the Scripture narrative presents several serious difficulties.

1. Why were the principal officers of government called, even from the most remote provinces, to take a part in this ceremony? The inauguration of an idol was not such an uncommon or important thing in the heathen world, as to call for such an unusual and dangerous measure, as to leave all the seats of local government, throughout all the provinces of that vast empire, without any of the princes, governors, captains, judges, treasurers, counselors, sheriffs, and rulers of the provinces. 2. Why was resistance to the king's decree regarded as so probable, if not inevitable, that a fiery furnace was prepared for the occasion, and already heated, in order to punish any person who should refuse submission? Nothing was more common, in the heathen world, than that the idolaters of one nation should worship the deities of another. The toleration of polytheism was universal. This may be seen in the idolatry of Jerusalem, and in the whole religious history of the ancients. Why, then, should Nebuchadnezzar anticipate a refusal of his subjects to worship his golden image? 3. Again: What are we to understand by the strange language of Nebuchadnezzar?—"The form of the fourth is like the Son of God." We are well aware of the critical objections which have been made to the translation of this clause; but it cannot be denied that the language implies the recognition of a *Divine Son*: how is this to be accounted for? We have heard nothing on this subject which removes these difficulties: they exist in all their force against the usual exposition of the Scripture narrative.

Before we propound the reasons which have led to the formation of a different opinion on the subject, let us call attention to two or three important observations founded upon the religious history of this age and country. It must not be forgotten that this event took place at Babylon, the primitive kingdom of the postdiluvian world. This monarchy was founded by Nimrod, who, by its establishment, aimed at frustrating the Divine purpose in the dispersion of mankind. The politico-religious character of his ambitious project has been already discussed; (Patriarchal Age, p. 333;) and our conclusion is, that his usurpation of power was based upon the prediction that a "seed of the woman" should be born, who should establish a Divine government upon earth, to which all people should be subject. We cannot now trace the result of his experiment any further than to say, that it is certain he was worshiped as divine, and that he was the original of the god Bel, or Belus, the principal divinity of Chaldea. Lest any doubt should rest upon this supposed reference to the primitive promise of a Redeemer, and its influence upon the rulers and policy of the ancient world, it may be observed, that the repeated *Avatars* celebrated in Hindoo mythology, in which a god is supposed to be born in a human form, are but a corruption of the same truth. It is further certain that, at the time when Nebuchadnezzar sat on the throne of Babylon, this primitive tradition was so prevalent in Egypt that "the birth of this great and all-powerful Being, his manifestation as an infant, his nurture and education through the succeeding periods of childhood and of boyhood, constituted the grand mystery of the entire system" of their religion. (Antiquities of Egypt, p. 145.) And this expectation of an incarnation of Deity in human form was so strong, that "a small edifice was erected by the side of every temple, the entrance to which was through the *adytum*, or sanctuary; so that it was, in the estimation of the people, the holy of holies, the perfection or crowning mystery of the entire worship. This is termed, in the hieroglyphic inscriptions, *Ma-em-misi*, 'the birth-place.'" (*Ibid.*, p. 140.) As the Hebrews had held such extensive commercial and political intercourse with the ancient world, and especially with Egypt and the East, it is impossible that their hope of the birth of a Divine Redeemer could have been unknown. Its connection with spiritual influence and religious effect might not have been apprehended; but the kingly character of the Redeemer, and the univer-

sal extent of his government, could scarcely have been concealed; and this would certainly have strengthened the general expectation of a Divine and universal Sovereign.

In those circumstances, when the uniform military success of Nebuchadnezzar is considered, and the rapid enlargement of his dominions and his insatiable ambition are taken into account, can it appear unreasonable to suppose that he felt the influence of these prevalent doctrines, and in consequence claimed to be an incarnation of the promised seed? And especially as this assumption would not only gratify the pride of his heart, but also afford an important means of promoting the consolidation of his immense empire. The manner in which he was addressed by the prophet Daniel might have tended to produce this assumption. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Dan. ii, 37, 38. It seems extremely probable that this vain monarch, overlooking the assertion of the prophet, that all this dignity was the gift of God, and might be withdrawn by him, and fixing his thoughts upon the height and universality of the dominion which it described, presumed to regard himself as divine; and it is remarkable that the next part of the narrative brings before us the account of the golden image.

But it may be said, "This, after all, is but a mere surmise: it might have been so; but what proof have we that Nebuchadnezzar did thus assume divinity?" It may not be possible to furnish absolute proof; but the following reasons are assigned for the opinion. From the Book of Judith it appears that some of the Assyrian kings were worshiped as gods, and that they claimed this worship exclusively. Chap. iii, 8; vi, 2. The decree which prohibited all prayer except to Darius, was framed in a similar spirit; and Jerome, who, from the age in which he lived, and his intercourse with the East, must have had superior opportunities of forming a judgment on this subject, thought that the golden image was a statue of Nebuchadnezzar. (Commentary, *in loc.*) "And this was the custom of the Persians by the institutions of Cyrus; and the images of the kings were worshiped as if they were the kings themselves."—*Jackson's Chronological Antiquities*, vol. i, p. 395. And the author of the Paschal Chronicle, either induced by similar arguments, or informed from positive sources, affirms that Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue "was an image of himself, *εἰκόνα τῆν ἐαυτοῦ χρυσῆν ἐστῆσεν*."—*Nimrod*, vol. iii, p. 364. With such reasons in favor of our opinion, and with the serious objections to the usual acceptance of the narrative which have been adduced, if no further support could be found for the interpretation which has been suggested, it ought not to be hastily rejected. But the principal proof of this profane assumption of Nebuchadnezzar is found in the pages of sacred Scripture. In the writings of Daniel we have a narrative of the case as it occurred: here we see it as recommended by the policy of the king for the adoption of his people. But we have, in the language of sublime prophecy, a description of the thoughts, purposes, and character of the king in this transaction. Looking forward to this sovereign, Isaiah thus portrays his proud assumption: "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." Chap. xiv, 13, 14. This prophecy is addressed to the king of Babylon, who was a great conqueror, and who was succeeded by his son and nephew, (or grandson,) after which the family was "cut off." It has not been, and cannot be, applied to any other prince than Nebuchadnezzar. What, then, does this language mean? 1. That this prince should profanely arrogate to himself divine honor. 2. That he would scorn to aim at this, as one of the Heathen hero-divinities: "I will exalt my throne above

the stars of God;" that is, I will rise beyond the mere elevation of deified mortals; "*I will be like the Most High.*" 3. This prophecy defines the character of his assumption with remarkable precision: "I will sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north." It has been abundantly shown (Patriarchal Age, pp. 129-135) that the loss of Paradise by the fall of man entered largely into the mythology of the primitive nations, and that the recovery of this abode of bliss was the great work which should be accomplished by the promised seed, and that in this way his sovereignty and the recovery of mankind were to be realized. Hence the highest English authority on a subject of this kind observes, "The sentiments here placed in the mouth of the arrogant tyrant seem evidently to refer to that apotheosis of sovereign princes which prevailed so extensively among the Gentiles; and the specific idea, which is meant to be conveyed, I take to be this: that the Babylonian monarch, not content even with the impiety of an ordinary deification, claimed, in the pride of his high speculations, the loftiest seat of the holy northern mount, that hill of the congregation, or synod of the demon-gods." What, then, are we to understand by this "holy northern mount" to which the prophet so pointedly alludes? The same learned author explains: "We may safely, I believe, answer, The garden of Paradise, which was situated in the northern mountains of Ararat; and Ezekiel (xxviii, 12-17) explains how we are to understand such imagery, by unreservedly calling this holy mountain by the name of *Eden, the garden of God.*"—*Faber's Pagan Idolatry*, vol. i, pp. 349, 350. Here, then, is a clear and ample prediction respecting Nebuchadnezzar: it states that he would claim divinity; that this would not be as a hero-demon, or deified monarch, but as equal to the MOST HIGH; and that it should include the recovery of the throne in Paradise, the great object of the promised seed. Was this prophecy ever accomplished? If so, when could it have been done, but in the case of the golden image?

These views find additional support in the fourth person whom Nebuchadnezzar saw in the furnace, and whom, by a Divine impulse, he was compelled to acknowledge as "the Son of God."

Again: The Popish antichrist is repeatedly referred to in the prophecies of the Apocalypse as Babylon, and under this designation is doomed to perpetual ruin. Has this application of the term "Babylon" to the Papacy ever been justified? or can it be, except on the interpretation of Daniel's narrative which is given above? On any other principle, what was there in Babylon to justify this use of the name? Egypt, Greece, Rome, and other ancient nations, were equally superstitious and idolatrous. Whence, then, this unenviable distinction on the part of Babylon? The view which we have taken of the conduct of Nebuchadnezzar solves the difficulty. If this proud king claimed the dignity, and aspired to the sovereignty of the Divine Messiah, and in this assumption demanded the unconditional religious and political submission of mankind, then his character was identical with that of the post-Christian antichrist; and they, being alike in crime, are doomed to the same infamy and ruin.

The recorded conduct of Nebuchadnezzar justifies this opinion. When endeavoring to carry out his profane project, he boldly legislated for the consciences of men, and prescribed the object of their worship; and even when abashed and confounded by Divine visitation, he still asserted the same monstrous power; and being convinced of the divine supremacy of the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, he decreed that whoever spoke anything amiss of this Deity, should "be cut in pieces, and their houses be made a dunghill." Dan. iii, 29. Nebuchadnezzar in this case did just what Alexander the Great copied, two or three hundred years afterward, in a less arrogant and intolerant manner.

NOTE 103, page 400.—*The predicted Invasion of Persia by Greece.*

GRAPHIC and vivid as are all these prophetic descriptions, there is none more remarkable than this. The Macedonians had been called the *Ægeadae* two hundred years before the time of Daniel; their first location in Greece was called *Ægeæ*, or *Ægæ*, "a Goat's Town;" and they had a goat for their ensign, or standard. Thus distinctly was the people identified with the prophetic emblem.

NOTE 104, page 400.—*Daniel's Notation of Prophetic Time.*

It must not be supposed that there is any ambiguity in the terms of this prophecy because it is now necessary to add the words "of years" after "weeks," in order to give a correct idea of the term of this prediction; nor must it hence be inferred that Daniel, or those for whom he wrote, were in danger of attaching any other meaning to this revelation than that which, with the addition of these words, is conveyed to our mind. The difference arises solely from the diversity of national circumstances and habit. We never unite our years into periods of seven: with the Hebrews, this was as common as to number days by sevens. As early as the life of Jacob this was usual: "Fulfill her *week*," definitely meant, to serve seven years. But as the Jewish computation of time, both for civil and ecclesiastical purposes, divided years into weeks, every seventh year being a Sabbath or sabbatic year, this form of language was confirmed. With the Hebrews, therefore, the term "week" would mean, indifferently, seven days, or seven years. The precise meaning of the word would therefore be fixed by the context, or by the addition of the term "years" or "days" after the word. In this case no addition was required; for a city could not be rebuilt in seven weeks of days; and seven weeks is the period allotted by the prophecy for the restoration of Jerusalem. (Dr. Clarke's Commentary, *in loco*.) This would be sufficient to remove all obscurity from the prophecy. But it is clear, from the language of the prophet, that he regarded the term (שָׁבִיעִי) here rendered "weeks," as strictly applying to a term of seven years, and used only by accommodation for a period of seven days. For although in this prophecy he repeatedly uses it, without any addition, to indicate a period of seven years, a few verses forward, (chap. x, 2, 3,) when he applies it to a term of seven days, he does add a word to it which fixes his meaning; and his language in those texts, literally rendered, is, as printed in the margin, *weeks of days*. No further proof can be necessary to show that the language and meaning of the prophet have been correctly given.

NOTE 105, page 403.—*The Knowledge which the Hebrews obtained of the Personality and Influence of Satan.*

No fact in the religious history of this people is more evident, than that they had clearer views of this doctrine after the captivity than they had previously possessed. This is indisputable. The only question of interest arising out of it respects the means by which this knowledge was acquired. Bishop Warburton rejects, with great indignation, what he terms the "impious slander," of the Jews having received from the followers of Zoroaster increased information respecting the doctrines of their holy religion. And this protest of the learned prelate is not uncalled for. Many Christian divines have written on this subject, as if great religious doctrines had been excogitated and perfected by the intellectual efforts of men. Even Bishop Russel, who has in other respects dealt with this subject in a very satisfactory manner, speaks of "ample proof that this doctrine had not its origin in Egypt, but

rather in the countries which stretch eastward from the Euphrates." The truth is, this doctrine had its origin in the revelations of the Holy Spirit; and such language is calculated to lead superficial minds into serious error. The case, however, seems to admit of a rational and Scriptural explanation. The Hebrew exiles were now brought back to the country from whence, fifteen hundred years before, Abraham had emigrated by the command of God. And as the Greeks obtained from this place a record of scientific observations, begun more than a hundred years before the time of this patriarch, it appears neither extravagant nor unreasonable to suppose that Daniel, who had access to all the literature of this ancient capital, might have discovered among their ancient records some sparkling elements of primitive revelation, some pure remains of patriarchal truth, which he would compare with subsequent fruits of inspiration, and use, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, for the instruction of his people.

The facts which come under our observation, both among the Hebrews and the Persians, afford corroborative proof of this position. Prior to the captivity, the latter people believed in the existence of two principles, the one a personification of all purity and of all good; the other, of all evil and malevolence; and that these were co-existent and independent, acting in direct hostility to each other: while the Hebrews regarded good and evil as alike proceeding from Jehovah. After the captivity, the faith of the Hebrews was corrected by admitting the doctrine of the personality and evil influence of Satan, although he was believed to act under the control and subject to the will of God. And it is remarkable that, soon after the restoration of the Hebrews, the religion of the Magi was reformed by Zoroaster; and one principal element of his improved faith was the introduction of the doctrine of one supreme God, as superior to the admitted principles of light and darkness. Thus, while the Hebrews obtained a clear knowledge of the personality and influence of Satan, the Persians were taught the important truth of the unity and unequalled perfections of God. But this result was in no case acquired through philosophy or human invention, but by the recovery and application of Divine revelation.

NOTE 106, page 410.—*The Testimony of Josephus.*

MANY writers have altogether discredited this account, because it rests entirely upon the authority of Josephus. We think this wrong, 1. Because he was a competent witness. He surely had the means of knowing the truth, with respect to the public transactions of his own country two or three centuries before his own time. And the writer who dared record the murder of a brother in the temple by a high priest, can scarcely be accused of partiality, especially in this part of his narrative, which has no connection with Roman influence or power sufficient to falsify his narrative. 2. The statement is in entire harmony with the predictions of Daniel. If God really inspired those prophecies, why might not he, by these dreams, prepare the way for their fulfillment?

NOTE 107, page 417.—*The Rising Power of Rome.*

AT this period, the Roman power, the fourth great kingdom of Daniel's prophecies, had made considerable progress, and was rapidly becoming the ruling nation of the world. The four kingdoms into which the Macedonian empire had been divided, were being rapidly subjected to the giant republic of the West. At this period, not only had the majesty of Rome been acknowledged throughout Italy, Spain, Gaul, and Sicily, but Carthage, humbled and powerless, lay at her feet; her arms had vanquished Philip of Macedon, and proclaimed Roman dominion, under the title

of freedom, to Greece; her power gave law to Egypt; and Seleucus, in Syria, held his throne only by Roman sufferance: in truth, at this time, Rome was the great arbitress of nations, from the Atlantic to the Euphrates. Therefore, the future fate of Judea, directly or remotely, depended upon the influence or power of Rome.

NOTE 108, page 417.—*The Prevalence of the Greek Language.*

THE prevalence of the Greek language at this time, and throughout the remainder of our history, merits notice. It might have been presumed, that the Macedonian conquest of Persia, conferring as it did upon the victor the sovereignty of Asia, would have introduced the knowledge of the Greek language, where it had before been scarcely heard of, and have brought it into tolerably extensive use, as the language of the court and the ruling powers. Yet, considering the short period of Alexander's government, and the almost immediate disruption of the empire, no such extensive adoption of the language would have been expected as actually took place. Its general diffusion must have been attributable to other causes. We, however, have not so much to do with the means as the fact. It is important that this should be distinctly recognized. Let it, then, be observed, that the four great kingdoms which arose out of the Macedo-Grecian empire, were, as regards language, essentially Greek. The Ptolemies introduced Greek into Egypt; and hence, when one of them wanted a copy of the sacred books of the Hebrews in his own language, the Septuagint was rendered into Greek. So the Syrian kingdom was one, speaking and writing the same language. Hence a learned writer on this subject observes, that, under these influences, "half of Asia Minor became a new Greece."—*Kitto's Cyclopædia*, art. *Greece*. We need not wonder, then, that the Greek language should have been studied by the Jews, who were now coming into daily contact with the Greeks of Egypt and Syria. Nor did the progress of the Roman arms check the advancement of this language; on the contrary, it gave it a mighty impulse, and rendered it all but universal. The Greek language was not only the learned one, but the aristocratic one, in Rome. It was spoken, or, at least, understood, in the Roman senate. Herod Agrippa and his brother addressed that august assembly in this tongue, by leave of Claudius. (Dion., lib. lx, cap. viii.) Josephus speaks decisively to the same fact. When he wrote his *History and Antiquities*, they were composed in Greek, being intended for universal circulation. Indeed, the Jews were so far from discouraging the use of the Greek language, that "they employed it habitually in profane (that is, non-sacred) works, and admitted it into official acts. An article of the Mishna prohibits the Jews from writing books in any other language except the Greek."—*Horne's Introduction*, vol. ii, p. 16.

NOTE 109, page 420.—*The Origin of the Sanhedrim.*

IT is sometimes supposed that the first allusion to the existence of the sanhedrim is found in the reign of Hyrcanus II.; (Josephus' *Antiq.*, book xiv, chap. ix, sect. 3;) although the Jews, prone to invest with the honors of remote antiquity all the institutions of their nation, trace this council to the times of Moses, and find the origin of it in the appointment of a body of elders, employed as assistants of the lawgiver in the discharge of his official functions. Num. xi, 16, 17. It seems probable, however, that a middle opinion is correct; that this council arose gradually after the cessation of the prophetic office, in consequence of the obvious want of some supreme direction and judicial authority. The constitution of this assembly justifies this conclusion. Maimonides tells us that this council was composed "of priests, Levites, and Israelites, whose rank entitled them to be associated with priests."—*Sanhed.*, cap. ii. And this opinion is confirmed by the mention of the senate here,

(2 Macc. iv, 44,) which was, in all probability, the sanhedrim, acting as a national council, and which interfered in this case, in the hope of terminating the frightful evils which were desolating the country.

NOTE 110, page 435.—*The Hebrew Community in Egypt.*

FROM the earliest ages of the Jewish monarchy, the Hebrews maintained considerable intercourse with Egypt. It is probable that many Israelites, either for the purposes of trade, or on account of political reasons, located there. When Shishak captured Jerusalem, in the days of Rehoboam, neither Josephus nor the Scriptures make any mention of his having carried away prisoners; but the Egyptian sculpture which commemorates this invasion, on the external wall of the palace at Karnak, contained an exhibition of a procession of captives. It is, however, now so much damaged, that only three figures fastened to a stake, with the names of the victims, remain legible. (Osburn's Egypt, p. 113.)

After the death of Josiah, Pharaoh-necho deposed his successor Jehoahaz, and carried him captive into Egypt, where he died. Whether on this occasion any other Israelites were taken thither, we are not informed. From this time to the subversion of the kingdom of Judah, the most powerful and popular party in Jerusalem were decidedly in favor of an alliance with Egypt, notwithstanding the continued declarations of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, that such a course was contrary to the Divine will. Yet all this showed the partiality of Israel for this kingdom; and the consequent probability that, in times of trouble and danger, many of the people would seek a location there.

This is proved to have been the case; for, after the entire subversion of Jerusalem, the remnant of the people, in defiance of the declared will of Heaven, sought refuge in Egypt. This emigration must have been considerable; for Hecataeus says, "The Jews were formerly a very numerous nation; for the Persians (Chaldeans) carried many thousands of them out of their country to Babylon; and after the death of Alexander, many thousands of them went to Egypt and Phenicia, (Arabia)." From these "were descended the Cyrenian Jews, among whom was Jason, author of the 'History of the Maccabees,' in five books, now lost, but of which the second book of Maccabees is an abridgment. Of the same country were those Cyrenian Jews, mentioned by St. Luke, and that Simon who helped to bear the cross of Christ.—*Ancient Universal History*, vol. iii, p. 28, note.

But all this was followed by a more numerous deportation of Israelites into Egypt. As we have already narrated, when Ptolemy Lagus was obliged to abandon the possession of Judea to Syria, he carried with him into his own country one hundred thousand Jews. It must be admitted that these were not located together in one district in Egypt. It is said that nearly thirty thousand were distributed to replenish his garrisons, and that many of the others were sent into Libya and Cyrene, (Josephus, *Contra Apion.*, lib. i,) which he had recently subdued. This latter colony became so populous, that one hundred thousand of them are said to have been put to death for an insurrection in the time of Vespasian. And yet Xiphilinus tells us, in his Life of Trajan, that in the following reign they were able to master the whole province, and to massacre two hundred thousand of other nations. (*Ancient Universal History*, vol. iii, p. 28, note.)

There can be little doubt that the great number of Jews who lived in Egypt, (the number of Jewish captives at this time was said to be one hundred thousand.—Pri-deaux's Connection, vol. ii, p. 2,) and the peculiarity of their religious manners and worship, were among the proximate causes of the Septuagint translation. As Ptolemy granted to the Jews all the privileges they enjoyed under Alexander, their

religion and history would inevitably attract attention from the great and learned, and induce a desire for a knowledge of their sacred books. This sovereign appears to have attached great importance to the increase of his Jewish subjects: he therefore "showed such kindness to those Jews that came to settle in Egypt, that great numbers of them, being attracted, partly by the fertility of the country, and partly by the great privileges they enjoyed, flocked thither from other parts."—*Ibid.*, p. 27. This was particularly the case during the Syrian persecution and its consequent calamities.

In the reign of Ptolemy Philometer, an opportunity offered (by which he rendered himself as great a benefactor of the Jews in Egypt as his predecessor had been) of giving them the sacred books in the Greek language. Onias, the son of Onias III., and legitimate heir of the high priesthood, having been excluded from that dignity, first by the intrigues of his relatives, and afterward because Lysias had succeeded in persuading the Syrian king that there was a necessity for bestowing this high office upon one who was not of the pontifical family, took refuge in Egypt. (*Ancient Universal History*, vol. iii, p. 80; consult Blair on the Canon, p. 34.) We have in his case an ample proof of the favor with which Hebrews, especially those of distinction, were received in that kingdom. But this was not the extent to which Jews were at that time tolerated and encouraged in Egypt; for Onias, displaying considerable capacity, was employed by the king in several important military affairs, which he so successfully conducted, that he was advanced to the highest dignity, both in the army and in the court; and he having formed an acquaintance with an other talented Israelite, who was introduced by him into an important official situation, these two Hebrews had the chief direction of Egyptian affairs. It appears, however, that all this dignity and power did not prevent Onias from thinking of the vocation to which his first attention had been directed. Having learned how desirous the king was to increase the number of his Jewish subjects, Onias informed him, that if he would comply with his request, he would induce the great body of the Jews to come and settle under his government. (*Josephus, Wars*, b. vii, ch. x, sect. 3.)

The monarch having expressed his willingness to meet his views as far as possible, Onias petitioned for leave to erect a temple similar to that in Jerusalem, and a city similar to that city. (*Ibid.*, b. i, chap. i, sect. 1.) His petition, which is preserved by Josephus, (*Antiq.*, b. xiii, ch. iii, sect. 3,) bases his request upon the services which he had rendered to the state, and requests that he might have leave to carry his purpose into effect at a place called Heliopolis, near Memphis. But as it was a universally recognized element of Jewish religion, that the temple at Jerusalem was the divinely appointed place of worship for all the Hebrew people, Onias thought it necessary to satisfy the king that his project was not opposed to the teaching of the Jewish Scriptures, as in that case, instead of being popular, the measure would rather alienate the people than conciliate them. He was, however, not only able to obviate this difficulty, but to quote the authority of the Jewish Scriptures in support of his project. For this purpose the ex-priest referred to a passage in the prophecy of Isaiah, (chap. xix, 18,) which, according to his showing, actually predicted the very erection at which he was aiming.

Having obtained the requisite authority from the king, Onias built the city and the temple, and became its priest. The subordinate priests were all selected from the family of Aaron: Levites were appointed to attend to the sacred services, and the temple became famous as a place where the Mosaic ritual was celebrated in the Greek language.

NOTE 111, page 436.—*The Samaritans.*

THE Samaritans, as has been already intimated, were descended from that mixed multitude of people which Shalmanezzer king of Assyria sent from Cuthah, Ava, and other places of his dominions, to occupy the country which had formed part of the kingdom of Israel, when he carried its population captive into Assyria. At first they appear to have been wholly idolatrous; but being greatly injured by wild beasts, it was supposed (in accordance with a heathen notion, that certain districts were under the special government of particular deities) that the scourge arose from the practice of this idolatry: and in this particular case Holy Scripture appears to sanction the opinion. A priest was therefore sent from among the captives, to teach the people "the manner of the God of the land." When he came, he taught them "how they should fear the Lord." But whether he was unfaithful, or they disobedient, this teaching did not prevent them from continuing to worship their idols; for "they feared the Lord, and served their own gods." 2 Kings xvii, 24-34.

On the return of the Jews from captivity, under the favor of the Persian sovereigns, the Samaritans at first endeavored to unite with them; but such a union having been rejected, they offered to their peace and object every opposition in their power. It will not be necessary here to refer further to their religious doctrines, or to the history of their copy of the Pentateuch: this will be done in another chapter.

In the time of Nehemiah, the Samaritans had obtained considerable *status* and power; and from the sacred narrative it would appear that the protection of the imperial court alone saved the Jews from suffering much injury from their anger. Their position was, however, greatly strengthened by the patronage which Sanballat prepared for his son-in-law, who was grandson to the Jewish high priest. For him the Samaritan governor built a temple upon Mount Gerizim, which was regarded ever after as the rival of that at Jerusalem. A hundred years afterwards this people had not only maintained their position; they had greatly increased in numbers and wealth; chiefly by means of the emigration of disaffected or apostate Jews, who could here enjoy greater license than in their own country.

When Alexander besieged Tyre, preparatory to his invasion of Persia, the Samaritans were able to aid him with provisions, and to contribute eight thousand men to his army. When, however, they found that this great warrior did not bestow on them such favors as he had given to their rivals the Jews, some of them set fire to the house of Andronicus, whom Alexander had made governor of their city, and he perished in the flames. This so enraged the Macedonian, that, although the other Samaritans delivered up the offenders to him, he expelled them from their city, and placed Greeks there in their stead. It was after this that the Samaritans occupied Shechem, which was henceforth their capital.

Yet, notwithstanding these reverses, this people possessed sufficient power to harass the Jews. During the government of Onias II., (B. C. 250,) we are informed that "the Samaritans were in a very flourishing condition, and much distressed the Jews, cutting off parts of their land, and carrying off slaves."—*Josephus, Ant.*, b. xii, ch. iv, sect. 1. (Compare *Ancient Universal History*, vol. iii, p. 43.) This state of things appears to have continued throughout the pontificate of this priest, probably thirty years at least.

We have no connected account of this people during the succeeding ages; but the fragments of information which have come down to us, prove that they avoided some of the most severe troubles with which the Jews were afflicted. When, for instance, Antiochus was prosecuting his insane crusade against the worship of Jehovah, and for the establishment of Grecian idolatry, the Samaritans, instead of making

common cause with the Jews, who were thus far their co-religionists, did not even join them in protest, or support the cause of truth by petition, against the decrees of the tyrant: on the contrary, they appear to have fallen into his views with avidity, preferring the abandonment of their religious principles, in the hope of securing the idolatrous king's favor, and of casting additional odium on the Jews, who manfully resisted this intolerant and persecuting measure. Hence we are told, that the Samaritans "sent a deputation to him, setting forth, that though they had hitherto conformed to many of the Jewish superstitions, in imitation of their forefathers, who had been persuaded to it for their own safety, yet they were now ready to forsake them, and to embrace the king's religion. They added, that they had a temple on Mount Gerizim, which was dedicated to a god without a name, but begged it might thenceforth be dedicated to the Grecian Jupiter. They concluded with a petition, that as they were not of Jewish, but Sidonian, extraction, and were ready to conform in everything to the king's will, they might not be involved in the same calamities with their wicked rivals. Antiochus readily granted their request, and dispatched a letter to Nicanor, his sub-governor there, with orders that they should be distinguished from the Jews, and that their temple should be dedicated according to their petition."—*Ancient Universal History*, vol. iii, p. 56, note.

At this period and henceforth, to the time of Jewish independence, the people called Samaritans must be regarded, not simply as the old enemies of the Israelites, whose history we have endeavored to sketch, but these in connection with the Greek inhabitants of Samaria, whom Alexander had sent to occupy that city. These two communities associated appear to have constituted the Samaritans which we afterward meet with in history.

NOTE 112, page 436.—*Violent Party Contest of Jews and Samaritans in Egypt.*

FROM the language and conduct of Onias, as well as from his lineage, and quotation of the prophet Isaiah, it is certain that, in building the Jewish temple at Heliopolis, he closely copied the Jerusalem sanctuary. This appears to have given umbrage to the Samaritans who dwelt at Alexandria; and they loudly complained that Mount Gerizim alone was the legitimate seat of Hebrew worship. The dispute ran so high, and assumed such a public aspect, that the parties solicited the king in council to hear and decide the case, each consenting that the deputies against whose cause judgment should be given, should suffer death. The pleadings and decision, as furnished by Josephus, do not prove much as to the judgment or equity of the Egyptian council: the Samaritans, however, were defeated, and their two advocates, Sabbeus and Theodosius, capitally punished. (Josephus, *Antiq.*, b. xiii, ch. iii, sec. 4.)

NOTE 113, page 436.—*The Coins of Simon Maccabeus.*

THE fact that the Hebrews coined money immediately on their obtaining their independence, is not only curious, but important in several respects.

It is worthy of notice, as corroborative of the early and general prevalence of the opinion which our Saviour made the basis of his argument with the Pharisees, when they asked him, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" He then clearly urged that the coinage of money for a people was an open and indisputable proof of sovereignty. So Simon, as soon as his independence was admitted by the power to which his country had been previously subject, coined money in his own name, and bearing inscriptions which differ in their construction, but all of them refer to the deliverance of Jerusalem. Thus, some have, "Simon Prince of Israel, the first year of the deliverance (or freedom) of Israel." Others have, "Simon. For the deliverance of Jerusalem." Others, "For the deliverance of Israel. Year 1." Others,

"For the deliverance of Jerusalem. Year 2." On some we read at full length, "The first year," or "third year, for the deliverance of Jerusalem," or "of Israel." Some have at full length, "The third year." The times when the several pieces were struck are thus carefully shown. These coins bear different emblematical devices: some have on one side a chalice or cup, which has been supposed to represent the vessel in which the manna was preserved; others, a branch of a tree, or the face of a building with columns; but we have no certain explanation of the subjects to which these refer. The letters on these coins are Samaritan; not entirely of the modern Samaritan character, but of a more ancient alphabet, square, and less of a running hand than that of the manuscripts and printed books.

But the coins of this period do not all bear the name of Simon; and this fact appears to cast light of an important character upon the attainment of Hebrew independence. Some of them, in fact the greater number, were struck for the nation in general: on them we read, "For the deliverance of Israel;" "For the deliverance of Zion," or "of Jerusalem." And it is remarkable that the coins so distinguished bear date two years prior to those which have the name of Simon: so that it seems evident that the people dared to assert their independence from the fact of their power, and that two years afterward, when the king of Syria formally relinquished his claim to the country in favor of Simon, and that high priest was recognized by the people as their prince, he coined money in his own name, and thus claimed the independent exercise of royal prerogative.

NOTE 114, page 463.—*The Religious Literature of the Jews.*

As frequent reference will be made to the recorded opinions of the Jews subsequent to the closing of the Old Testament canon, it seems desirable to give some account of their principal literary productions in this place.

The most prominent portion of these writings is contained in the collection popularly denominated the "Apocrypha." They were principally the production of Alexandrian Jews, and generally, in point of time, hold a middle place between the completion of the Old Testament and the commencement of the Christian era. Josephus thus speaks of them: "From the reign of Artaxerxes, to within our memory, there have been several things committed to writing, which, however, have not acquired the same degree of credit and authority as the former books, (the Old Testament,) inasmuch as the tradition and succession of the prophets were less certain." *Contra Apion*, b. i, ch. viii. We notice them briefly in order.

THE FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS.—In several manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate, as well as in all the printed editions anterior to the decree of the Council of Trent, and in many since that period, there will be found four books following each other, entitled, the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Books of Ezra. The first two are the canonical books of Ezra and Nehemiah; the third and fourth are the same which are called the First and Second Books of Esdras in the English authorized version of the Apocrypha. Although these books stand together under the same name, they are very different in their character. The First Book of Esdras is found in all the MSS. of the Septuagint, and is little more than a recapitulation of the Book of Ezra; it is, more properly, a version interspersed with some remarkable interpolations, than an original work. It was known and used by Josephus: it is, therefore, older than the Jewish historian; but nothing further is known of its author or age.

THE SECOND BOOK OF ESDRAS consists of a number of similitudes or visions bearing some analogy to the Apocalypse. The descriptions are frequently distinguished by great sublimity of thought, energy of conception, and elegance of

expression. This book is ascribed to the prophet Ezra by Clemens Alexandrinus, who regarded it as canonical and divine; as did Irenæus, Tertullian, and Ambrose; but it is rejected as apocryphal by Jerome, a judgment which is amply sustained by the numerous rabbinical fables and ridiculous revelations which it contains. Jahn and other critics suppose it to have been written by a converted Jew, about the end of the first, or beginning of the second century; but Archbishop Laurence, with much more show of reason, ascribes it to a Jew who never changed his creed, and who lived before the Christian era.

THE BOOK OF TOBIT was regarded by all ancient writers as historical and authentic. Luther appears to have been the first who doubted its historic truth. It narrates the history of Tobit and his family, who were carried into captivity to Nineveh; but it contains so many rabbinical fables, and so much of Babylonian demonology, that Bertholdt, Eichorn, Jahn, and other critics, have regarded it as a moral fiction: the opinion of the ancients, however, appears to be sustained by the best authority. Professor Stuart ascribes it to an early period of the exile; Jahn, to about B. C. 150 to 200; and no more probable estimate of its age can be assigned.

THE BOOK OF JUDITH presents such very great difficulties to the critic, that they have by many been deemed insuperable; but the historical character of an ancient work, which was never questioned before the Reformation, and which is regarded as authentic by Jackson, Hales, and Clinton, will not be hastily given up by the judicious reader. The date of the book is uncertain: Dr. Prideaux refers it to the age of Manasseh; Jahn, to that of the Maccabees: it is generally supposed to have been originally written in Chaldee, and that the Syriac version was made from a Greek translation.

ADDITIONS TO THE BOOK OF ESTHER.—These chapters are found in the Septuagint version, although not known in the Hebrew. They were also contained in the old Latin version, which was translated from the Greek, and were retained in his own version by Jerome, who removed them to the end of the book, in which position they are still found in all MSS. and printed editions of the Vulgate, forming the last seven chapters, according to Cardinal Hugo's division. They are evidently the production of a Hellenistic Jew,—Jahn thinks of more than one; but the date of their composition is unknown.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON has always been admired for the sublime ideas which it contains of the perfections of God, and for the excellent moral tendency of its precepts. In the first part of this book the author personates Solomon, and, in his name, admonishes all, and especially kings, to acquire wisdom, not only as the best security against the ills of life, but as leading to future glory and immortality; whilst a contrary course tends to misery here, and still greater misery hereafter. This, in the opinion of Jahn, is the first express mention of a future state of rewards and punishments. The following parts of the book contain historical examples drawn from the Old Testament; the whole concluding with divers pious and philosophical observations. The best critics suppose it to have been written about a century before Christ.

ECCLESIASTICUS, OR THE WISDOM OF JESUS THE SON OF SIRACH.—This, like the preceding, has sometimes been regarded as the production of Solomon: with this impression, the Council of Carthage deemed it canonical, under the title of "The Fifth Book of Solomon," a decision which was adopted by the Council of Trent. But this notion is sufficiently refuted by the facts, that it contains an evident allusion to the captivity, (chap. xlvii, 24, 25,) and eulogizes Simon, the son of Onias as if he had been contemporary with the author. Chap. 1, 1–21. The most probable opinion is, that the writer collected some fragments which were commonly attributed

to Solomon, and which he has mingled with other materials, accompanying the collection with his own observations. We have no information respecting the author but what is derived from the book itself, which attributes it to Jesua, the son of Sirach of Jerusalem : he is supposed to have lived about 180 B. C. It was originally written in Hebrew, or, rather, in the Syro-Chaldaic dialect. Addison says of this book, that "the little apocryphal treatise entitled 'The Wisdom of the Son of Sirach,' would be regarded by our modern wits as one of the most shining tracts of morality that is extant, if it appeared under the name of a Confucius, or of any celebrated Grecian philosopher."—*Horne's Introduction*.

THE BOOK OF BARUCH contains three parts : 1. An exhortation to wisdom, and an observance of the law ; 2. An exhibition of Jerusalem as a widow, comforting her children with a hope of return from captivity ; and, 3. An answer follows in confirmation of this hope. It has been supposed by some critics to have been written by Baruch, the friend of Jeremiah ; but it is not extant in Hebrew. Whiston contends for its canonicity ; and Irenæus, Cyprian, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, Basil, Epiphanius, and other fathers, quote it generally as a part of the Book of Jeremiah. Calmet states that many Catholic divines, as well as Protestants, deny its canonicity ; as do Jerome among the ancients, and Jahn among the moderns. It is, however, certain that it is older than the Second Book of the Maccabees. Grotius supposes it to have been composed by some Hellenistic Jew ; in which opinion he is probably correct.

THE SONG OF THE THREE CHILDREN does not appear to have ever been extant in Hebrew, although it has always been admired for the piety which it generally breathes. The fifteenth verse, by asserting that there was "no prophet" at the time when the three youths were cast into the fiery furnace, states an untruth ; for it is certain that both Ezekiel and Daniel exercised their sacred functions at that period. It is most probably the work of a Hellenistic Jew ; it was used so early as the third century in the liturgies of the Christian Church.

THE HISTORY OF SUSANNA is probably a moral parable, founded, perhaps, on some fact : it is evidently the work of some Hellenistic Jew.

THE HISTORY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF BEL AND THE DRAGON was always rejected by the Jewish Church : it is not extant in the Hebrew or the Chaldee language. Jerome calls it the Fable of Bel and the Dragon. Jahn believes it was written to warn the Jews in Egypt against the sin of idolatry, and that it must be attributed to the age of the Ptolemies, when serpents were still worshiped at Thebes. Yet, although these several pieces are so generally regarded as composed by Jews in Egypt, who were far removed from the subjects narrated or referred to, it is but just to say that Professor Alber, of Pesth, contends for their historic truth.

THE PRAYER OF MANASSES, though not unworthy the occasion on which it is pretended to have been composed, was never recognized as canonical, and is not referred to by any writer earlier than the fourth century of the Christian era.

THE BOOKS OF MACCABEES.—There were four books of this name known to the ancients, of which three are still read in the Eastern, and two in the Western Church. The first of these books contains a lucid and authentic history of the Jews during the tyranny of Antiochus, and the valiant efforts of the Asmonean family for the deliverance of Israel. It embraces a period of forty years, from B. C. 175, to B. C. 135. It is by many attributed to John Hyrcanus ; but no certain information respecting it has been obtained, except that it could not have been written before his time. Its author was a Jew of Palestine, who wrote in the Syro-Chaldaic dialect. Although very brief, and, in some instances, defective, it is of great value. The Second Book of Maccabees is a very different production : it is principally an abridgment of a more ancient work, which was written by a Jew

named Jason, and contains the history of the Jews for about fifteen years, going partly over the same ground as the first book, to which, however, it is much inferior in authority, and requires to be read with great caution. It has been supposed that Jason lived about B. C. 150, and that this epitome was made in the beginning of the last century before Christ.

These pieces are contained in the authorized English version of the Apocrypha, and in modern times have obtained the appellation of Deutero-Canonical Books, their distinguishing peculiarity being that, although not in the Hebrew canon, they were publicly read in the early Christian Church. Besides these, there are other apocryphal books which have come down to our times; such as the third and fourth Books of Esdras, the Book of Enoch, the Book of Elias the prophet, the third, fourth, and fifth Books of the Maccabees, the Ascension of Isaiah, the Assumption of Moses, with a few others; but several of these scarcely deserve to be reckoned as belonging to the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, as they have been most probably written since the second century of the Christian era.

THE TARGUMS constitute another important portion of the religious literature of this period. They originated in the change which took place in the language of the Hebrews during the captivity. The want which this change occasioned, and the means by which it was met, are fully detailed in the Book of Nehemiah. Chap. viii. Ezra, on this occasion, assisted by several other learned men, "read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." Neh. viii, 8. The exposition of the pure Hebrew Scriptures in the Chaldaic dialect,—that the great mass of the people, having been born and brought up in Babylonia, had acquired,—which was made orally, could only afford a temporary supply of the requisite information. These explanations were afterwards extended to all the Scriptures by many learned individuals, and committed to writing. This was the origin of the Targums. At what time these began to be written, we are not informed; but there appears to be every reason for believing that there were written Targums of several Old-Testament books in the time of the Maccabees. Nor is it at all probable that the Jews of Palestine would remain destitute of copies of the Scriptures in their native Syro-Chaldaic language, after those of Egypt possessed the same advantage in the Septuagint. At present we know of eleven Targums, three of which comprehend the five books of Moses. But of these only two were written before the Christian era: these are important helps to an acquaintance with the religion of this period. The Targum of Onkelos was, according to the Babylonian Talmud, written by Onkelos, a disciple of Hillel, who died B. C. sixty years. It is rather a translation than a paraphrase, and follows the original word for word: the work is, therefore, particularly useful in criticism. The Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel was, by Eichorn and others, supposed to have been written before the time of Onkelos; but the grounds assigned for this early date have been since pronounced unsatisfactory; and Jonathan is now believed to have lived a short time before the birth of Christ. The great value of this Targum is seriously diminished by the frequent interpolations and mutilations to which it has been subjected; yet, even in its present state, it renders valuable aid to critical researches into the text of Scripture, and casts much light upon the religious opinions of the Jews at this period.

There is another portion of Jewish literature to which attention must be directed, although it was written before the birth of Christ; but which is important as embodying opinions and materials that were prevalent during the preceding period. We first refer to PHILO JUDÆUS, who was a learned Jew of Alexandria, and lived during the early part of the first century, having been sent on a special mission to the court of Rome, A. D. 40. Some attempts have been made to prove that he became a

Christian; but these appear destitute of foundation. It is probable that he was sixty years of age when Jesus Christ was crucified; and, as Christianity was not propagated in Egypt until several years after that event, it is not likely that Philo had any acquaintance with Christianity, at least not so as to affect his public conduct or literary productions. His works, therefore, as far as they refer to the text of holy Scripture and the doctrines of the Jewish Church, may be fairly regarded as exhibiting the opinions of the best informed among the Israelites at the time of the appearing of the Messiah.

JOSEPHUS is another person of the same class. Throughout his various works he not only exhibits the opinions of the Jews, but proves, from their extensive range, that vast stores of literary wealth were at this time accessible to diligent inquirers into the history and religion of Judea.

Besides these, we must refer to the contents of the MISHNA; for, although this was not committed to writing, as we have it, until the time of rabbi Judah, about A. D. 190, (or, as some scholars contend, sixty years earlier,) it is well known that it embodies the civil and canonical law of the Jewish people. It contains that collection of traditions which was used in the ages immediately preceding the birth of Christ, as an authoritative expounder of the sacred Scriptures. According to the doctrine of the Jews, Moses on Mount Sinai received not only the written law which is given in the Pentateuch, but also an interpretation of it; and while the first was committed to writing, and thus preserved, the other was transmitted orally from Moses to Joshua, from him to the seventy elders, by whom it was communicated to the prophets, who transmitted it in regular succession, until the gift of prophecy ceased, when it was deposited with the men of the great synagogue, the last of whom was Simon the Just, who communicated it to the rabbins, and it was by them preserved until after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews; when, apprehensive that this precious deposit would be lost, these traditions were carefully collected and written by rabbi Judah. Although it would be an easy task to disprove this alleged high antiquity and Divine origin of the contents of the Mishna, yet it is certain that these traditions had a veritable existence for a long time before the birth of Christ, and that they constituted the great power by which the Pharisees for ages molded the religious opinions and swayed the political feelings of the Hebrew people. We must therefore have respect to these also in the light of literary materials locked up with a sacred caste, and as such calculated to increase our knowledge of the religious character of this age.

An attention to these several sources of information is necessary to our obtaining any satisfactory knowledge of the religious history of the Hebrew people.—(Horne's Introduction, vol. ii, pp. 416–422; vol. iv, pp. 239–249; Kitto's Cyclopædia, articles *Deutero-canonical*, *Apocrypha*, *Talmud*, *Targums*, and the names of the Apocryphal Books; Wotton's Traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees, vol. i; Gray's Connection of Sacred and Profane Literature; and Bryant on the Sentiments of Philo.)

NOTE 115, page 480.—*The unfounded Claims of the Mishnaic Traditions.*

As our Lord Jesus Christ so distinctly states that the means by which the Pharisees made void the word of God were the traditions which they held, it becomes necessary to furnish some explicit account of the claims put forth on behalf of the Mishna, and to show that both its antiquity and authority have been exaggerated. With regard to its antiquity: if Moses had left such an oral exposition of laws which he gave the Israelites in writing, is it not astonishing that in the later writings of the great lawgiver we find no reference whatever to it? This omission is rendered still more remarkable from the fact, that nearly forty years after the law was given, and

after these traditions are also said to have been communicated, Moses wrote the Book of Deuteronomy, for the great purpose of exhorting the people to a constant and diligent observance of the law. Is it not, then, an astonishing circumstance, that in this book these traditions are never referred to? that, among the numerous exhortations to render obedience to the law, there should be no reference to the only authorized exposition of it? But we have not only this strange omission, as an argument against the early existence of these traditions, but positive proof that they did not at that time exist. It must be acknowledged that the whole traditionary scheme rests upon the assumption that the law was given in a complete form, and that the oral explications were communicated entire at the same time. Upon this their authority rests: yet what is the fact? Why, that in the Book of Deuteronomy Moses not only gave many new laws, but also written explanations of some which had been announced before. "It is worth while here to enumerate some of them. Deut. xiii, we have particular directions concerning the method which they were to use when any men or cities were revolted to idolatry. Deut. xiv, they were commanded to turn the second tithe into money, and to carry that money to the place that the Lord should choose, and there lay it out upon meat and drink, with which they and their households, especially the Levites that dwelt among them, were there to rejoice. *Ibid.*, the poor's tithe was to be eaten at home every third year; and the Levites, the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless were to be invited to eat with them. Deut. xvi, 21, they were forbidden to plant groves of trees near the altar. Deut. xvii, 8-13, priests and Levites were made determiners, together with judges appointed on purpose, in cases of difficulty which should arise concerning the law. *Ibid.*, they were allowed to make such a king as the Lord their God should choose; and, if they did so, he was to do as is there prescribed. Deut. xix, 14, they were forbidden to remove their neighbor's land-mark; and those that did so were to be solemnly cursed from Mount Ebal." These and numerous other new laws were added by Moses, nearly forty years after he came down from the Mount; and they not only show that the entire scheme of Divine law, with its divinely-appointed mode of exposition, was not then given, but that *there was no order observed in giving the Mosaic laws, and that very many of them were given upon particular occasions, in which it was necessary to make such determinations.*

This last observation destroys the whole traditionary system. There are four cases that prove it beyond contradiction. In Leviticus xxiv, we have an account of one who was brought before Moses for blaspheming the name of the Lord, and cursing. Now, though this happened soon after the coming of Moses down from the mount, we see that he would not determine the matter till he had inquired of the Lord: the man was therefore put in ward. Upon inquiry, God directed that this man should be stoned: he was so; and then God commanded that for the future every man who should blaspheme the name of the Lord, whether he were a stranger or one born in the land, should be surely put to death. Verses 10-16. The same method was observed in the case of the man found gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. Num. xv. Afterwards, when the Israelites were come to the banks of the Jordan, God gave the laws for appointing cities of refuge. Num. xxxv. At that time also the case of the daughters of Zelophedad was provided for, and a new law dispensed to meet this emergency. Num. xxxvi. Thus were new laws and authorized expositions of old statutes given long after this pretended revelation of the oral law. Further than this, it might be argued that when Moses prescribed the manner in which intricate cases were to be settled, (Deut. xvii, 8-11,) he did not mention this oral law, as he certainly would have done, if it had been previously given as an authorized exposition of the written commandments.

But the improbability of the pretended early existence of these traditions is mani-

fest from the fact, that many times in Hebrew history they must have perished, even if Moses had given them. See the speech of Azariah. 2 Chron. xv, 2-7. The time to which the prophet referred was evidently that of the Judges, which is described in that book. Chap. ii, 11-19. To the days of Samuel this state of things continued with little intermission. 1 Sam. iii, 1. How, in these times, could this immense mass of tradition have been preserved, together with their thirteen ways of reasoning, many of which are so intricate and subtle, that it is not an easy matter to explain them, much less to use them readily? Were these men, who abandoned the law, and even renounced the worship of God, the men who were careful to preserve in the utmost purity nice and subtle traditions concerning the meaning of this law? Times equally unpropitious frequently occurred under the reign of the kings. 2 Kings xxii, compared with 2 Chron. xxxiv. Again: the difficulty stated in the first book of the Maccabees (chap. iv, 44-46) could not have existed if the people possessed at that time complete means of explaining the law in these authorized traditions.

Besides this evidence, there are proofs arising out of the nature of these traditions, which would alone be sufficient to refute the origin ascribed to them, and destroy their authority. Whatever is unjust or knavish cannot have come from God: a law, and an exposition of it which contradicts or evades it, cannot both have proceeded from the same Divine source: these may be safely taken as axioms. In the fourth commandment, every man knows that the Jews were expressly forbidden to do any servile work on the Sabbath day. But in case anything was to be done which a man could do alone, as the carrying of a loaf, if two removed it together they were both held to be innocent; although, if one removed it alone, he would be guilty, the Mishna excusing them in the former case because neither did the work singly. *Shabbath*, chap. x, sec. 5; chap. xiii, sec. 6. This principle of freeing two persons who deliberately join to break the law is knavish, and evidently makes the word of God of none effect. Again: God positively commanded that he who made a vow should keep it. Num. xxx, 2. This is direct and plain. But if a man was weary of his vow, he might, according to the Mishna, go to a wise man, and be absolved from his vow. *Shabbath*, chap. xxiv, sec. 5, with Wotton's note. There is a question in the Mishna which shows the flagrant injustice of these doctors, and at the same time illustrates the words of our blessed Lord, Matt. xv: "R. Eliezer says, they open a man a gate (for repentance,) in honor of his father and his mother; but the wise bind." What they mean here is this: A man vows, or says *Corban* or *Kouam*, or some such equivalent words,—that his father or his mother shall not be the better for what he has. This, perhaps, he says in his anger; but still he is bound not to relieve them, because, as they speak, the vow binds. Thus, through the force of this tradition, the passion of a disobedient son outweighs the authority of God's law.

If, then, as appears so fully evident, the antiquity, origin, and authority claimed by the rabbins for the Mishna are unfounded, what is the true state of the case with respect to these particulars? This question must be answered by a simple statement of the conclusions to which a lengthened investigation of the subject has conducted us, as we have not space for the whole argument. With respect to its antiquity, the Mishna itself makes no pretensions to the age which is claimed for it. The earliest name given for the authentication of the traditions which it contains, is that of Simon the Just. Nor does Maimonides, its great advocate, cite any higher authority for the early age which he assigns to it. The most probable conclusion, therefore, is, that the collection of traditions was begun by private persons soon after the return of the people from captivity; and, being greatly stimulated by the success of the Maccabees, this practice was continued until, soon after the nation had obtained independence, the principal part of the present contents of the Mishna was collected

and taught. The origin of these traditions, therefore, was not divine, but human: they are not explanations of the law communicated by God to Moses, but the labored opinions of the most eminent men of the Hebrew nation, collected from the time of Ezra downward to the century before Christ. If these conclusions are well founded, then it will appear that the Mishna faithfully exhibits the religious opinions of the most learned of the Hebrew doctors, and the consequent religious practice of the Jewish people, at the commencement of the Christian era: it is therefore the highest authority which we possess respecting the customs and usages of the Jews, and the views which they entertained of the Old-Testament Scriptures. And as the voice of a nation is of more weight than the testimony of any single person of that nation, let his quality, learning, or means of information be what they will; so the authority of the Mishna, where it is not contradicted by the New Testament, and much more where it illustrates any text therein contained, ought to be regarded as of more weight than Philo, Josephus, or any subsequent writers. But with respect to its authority as a divinely-appointed expositor, the arguments already given, and the frequent discordance and contrariety between the different rabbis whose opinions it records, are abundantly sufficient to refute its assumptions.—(Wotton's Traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees; Allen's Modern Judaism; Prideaux's Connection.)

NOTE 116, page 483.—*The Karaites.*

SCALIGER has thrown out some opinions respecting the Jewish sects, which not only cast clearer light upon the origin of the Sadducees, but also afford important information respecting another and still smaller sect, the KARAITES. He supposes that after the Jews returned from Babylon, (when the people were intent upon studying the law, in order to obey it,) they were divided into two great parties, who lived for a long period very amicably together: one was the ASSIDEANS, who were desirous not only to obey the law according to the letter, but to do something further by way of supererogation, that they might appear holier than the rest. Being voluntarily devoted to the law, they were afterwards called *Chasdim*, (1 Macc. ii, 42,) and ultimately resolved themselves into the powerful sect known as the Pharisees. The other of these primitive parties was called *Letter-Men*, who kept strictly to the letter of the law, and denied the authority of all traditions: these were afterward called *Karaites*. They assert that the genuine succession of the Jewish Church has been preserved only among them; and they have produced a catalogue of their doctors, whom they affirm to have flourished in an uninterrupted series from the time of Ezra the inspired scribe. These opinions have since been fully confirmed, and there appears reason to believe that as the traditions and interpretations of the Assideans were collected and invested with authority, they were opposed by a numerous body who maintained the sufficiency of the Scripture alone in its literal sense, and who became a distinct sect under the name of *Karaites*. From this sect, under the influence of a spirit of philosophizing skepticism, the Sadducees arose, who impiously denied a future state, and the existence of all incorporeal beings. From this circumstance the Pharisees obtained the opportunity of denouncing the Karaites as identical with the Sadducees. But this allegation is amply disproved by the remains of the sect; who, although few in number, still exist, and firmly believe in the doctrine of the resurrection. It has been fully proved that their predecessors always believed in another life,—a resurrection of the just and the unjust; and that they constantly opposed the pretensions of those who maintained the authority of the oral law. It has further been rendered probable, that by the Scribes, who are mentioned as distinct from the *Pharisees*, in most places where they are named, our

Lord meant these Letter-Men, or *Karaites*, as the Greek word *γραμματεῖς* may be rendered: and, further, that what our Saviour says of the *Lawyers*, (Luke xi, 46,) who were certainly not Pharisees, may be very well applied to them, because they professed to adhere so rigidly to the law. And thus it would seem that even those who received the writings of the Old Testament as the only standard of truth, had, in the time of Christ, by their carnal refinements, lost all the spirituality of religion. (Wotton's Traditions; Allen's Modern Judaism; and Prideaux's Connection.)

NOTE 117, page 485.—*Were the Essenes Christians?*

IN a long, learned, and very eloquent article contained in "Blackwood's Magazine" for 1840, a new theory respecting this sect is ingeniously started, and most ably advocated. The object of the writer is to show that the Essenes were not a Jewish sect, but the Christian Church. Our limits will not allow even of an analysis of the arguments which the learned writer adduces in support of his position. But as this opinion has been put forth in a periodical of such high character and extensive circulation, it becomes necessary to state the reasons which prevent us from receiving the theory thus propounded. The wide range of subjects involved in the question, compels us to fix on two or three of the most important points.

The first and one of the strongest arguments upon which the writer relies to maintain his position, is this: that, although Christ mixed with all kinds of character, and every class of society, in Judea, he never once mentions or alludes to the Essenes; and that, although the four Evangelists, each in his own peculiar manner, narrated his life and actions, and several of the apostles wrote epistles to different churches, or to the collective body of believers, under different circumstances, and on several occasions, they all maintain the same silence as to the existence of the Essenes, or the religious peculiarities of the sect. And from hence it is inferred that the Essenes did not exist before Christ. But we would ask, Is it a more remarkable fact that the New-Testament writers should not have noticed the Essenes, than that Philo and Josephus should never have referred to the Christians? Both these omissions appear to be accounted for by the smallness of these parties at the time when those authors flourished. But there are two objections which appear to be fatal to the inference deduced. First, the Christians were not congregated together in any part of Judea. The Essenes are described as occupying the western bank of the Dead Sea. Now no difficulty which is found in the commonly received account of the Essenes is more startling than the assertion, that Christians who were scattered over the world, not only in Judea, but in Damascus, Antioch, the cities of Asia Minor, as well as in Greece and Rome, should be described by an author so well informed as Pliny, as a Jewish sect located on the banks of the Dead Sea. Secondly, when it is remembered that Pliny died A. D. 79, just ten years after the destruction of Jerusalem, can we believe that the Christians had in his time risen up into such consequence as to obtain notice as a separate and distinct people; and that he should not only err in supposing them located in a particular district in Judea, but still more so in believing this recent sect to be of very great antiquity? For Pliny says, "Thus for many thousand years (a thing incredible, and yet most true) the people hath continued."—*Natural History*, b. v, sect. 17.

In another respect this writer appears to have failed in establishing the identity of the Essenes and Christians; namely, in their doctrines and religious practices. The Christians have always been distinguished by their love to Christ, and their glorying in his name. This was especially the case in primitive times. In no instance has this learned writer more seriously erred than in supposing that the violence of persecution induced the Christians to conceal their profession of devotedness

to Christ and to hide themselves. This allegation is confuted by every authentic account of primitive Christianity. We might on this point ask many questions; such as, When did the Christians of Judea adopt this course? When did they again emerge from this concealment? But it is not necessary. We know that the Christians were not wholly driven from Jerusalem until the reign of Vespasian, when, taught by the signs of the times, agreeably to their Saviour's prophecy, they fled in a body to the city of Pella beyond Jordan, and thus escaped the miseries of the terrible siege of Jerusalem. (Eusebius's History, b. iii, ch. v.) But it may be objected, that the persecution which arose in the case of Stephen did certainly drive many of the Christians from the Hebrew capital. This is admitted; but the inspired account of this circumstance refutes the hypothesis which we combat. On that occasion they did not go together to live as a community in a remote district; they "were scattered abroad." Nor did they say, according to our author, "Let there be darkness; let us muffle ourselves in thick clouds which no human eye can penetrate:" on the contrary, they "went everywhere preaching the word." Other particulars might be referred to in detail; but we must content ourselves with saying that the despising of riches, early worship, neglect of wedlock, eminent fidelity, and length of life, are not distinguishing elements of Christian faith and practice: on these principles it would be easy to prove the identity of some of the Hindoo sects and Christians. If we had heard of faith in the Redeemer, pardon of sin obtained, communion with God through his Spirit, a glorious hope of heaven, there would have been some show of reason in the argument.

Upon the whole, then, the evidence in favor of the existence of the Essenes as a Jewish sect seems sufficient to place the fact beyond doubt; while the prevalence of Christianity throughout the empire, and the undoubted tenacity with which its disciples clung to the name of, and proclaimed their faith in, the crucified Saviour, prove that they could not have been described under this title.

NOTE 118, page 591.—*The Divine Intention in Prophecy defeated by Tradition.*

No candid and serious reader of the Old-Testament Scriptures can retain any doubt that the purpose of God in the dispensation of prophecy was to afford the elect people an agency adapted to the development of the great scheme of redemption. That which was obscurely symbolized by the types and figures of the law, was intended to be fully revealed, and completely carried into effect. A perfect sacrifice, a glorious high priesthood, an actual, personal entrance into the spiritual presence of Deity, a real cleansing from moral pollution,—these and other inestimable religious privileges were intended to be conferred, through the development of those germs of living truth contained in the Mosaic Scriptures. But by what means was this to be effected? By prophecy. Men, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, were led to direct the public mind from external semblance to internal reality, and thus to prepare the way for the glorious establishment of the kingdom of God in the earth. The Divine purpose in respect of Israel was, therefore, *progress*. It was intended that they should, by successive revelations, be raised from a temporal to a spiritual kingdom. We can now scarcely survey the wonderful adaptation of the means to the end, without amazement at the display which is thus afforded of Divine goodness and wisdom. But all these purposes were defeated, this hope was cut off, by the unjust and extravagant authority with which tradition was invested. Of this abundant proof may be given.

A first step in this process was to invest the oral law with an authority equal to the Scriptures: this was fully asserted by Maimonides. One feature of the case is curious: it was maintained "that what Joshua and Phineas collected from their

thirteen rules, in order to the explaining of the meaning of any law, was not done by the Spirit of prophecy." By means of this tenet they attached the same importance and authority to late as to early traditions, and thus established a human interpreter of Divine law. But while it was admitted that these traditions were not compiled under prophetic inspiration, they were nevertheless held to be superior to the declaration of any prophet: "Since these received traditions are supposed to be interpretations made by Moses, and, consequently, of equal value with the written law itself, *a prophet had no more authority over the one than he had over the other.*" This statement is not a casual or incidental remark; Maimonides expands and explains his meaning: "As to matters of disquisition and reasoning, and skill in the law, by which we come to understand the meaning of it, prophets are upon the same level with other wise men of the same rank and judgment with themselves as to the study of the law, who have not the gift of prophecy. So that if a thousand prophets, all equal to Elijah or Elisha, should offer to give an interpretation of any law, and a thousand and one wise men should give a sufficient interpretation which is different from theirs of the same law, the majority ought to be attended to."

It must be observable that this teaching neutralized all the power of prophetic inspiration: and the whole range of Mishnaic literature shows that this was the great object aimed at. For instance, in the case of the woman condemned by the law to lose her hands, (Dent. xxv, 12,) this the traditions interpret putting her to open shame; upon which it is declared "that if a prophet should affirm that this law ought to be literally understood, he ought to be strangled as a liar." By this means tradition reigned supreme, and the benign object of prophecy was lost.

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